

Esomar: 28 Questions to help buyers of Online Samples

Company Profile

1. *What experience does your company have in providing online samples for market research?*

Since its inception in 2009, keyfacts has been creating its own online access panel. The highest data quality as well as first-class panel maintenance are top priority for keyfacts. A highly qualified team with many years of experience in online sampling and project management supports the panel in its creation, maintenance and project implementation. In addition to standard random samples, complex projects with specific target groups as well as larger tracking studies are handled with the greatest care.

Sample Sources and Recruitment

2. *Please describe and explain the type(s) of online sample sources from which you get respondents. Are these databases? Actively managed research panels? Direct marketing lists? Social networks? Web intercept (also known as river) samples?*

The panel is an actively maintained online access panel. Diversified recruitment channels are used to recruit respondents. A broadly diversified affiliate network, for example, is used for recruitment purposes. This guarantees a high degree of heterogeneity and ensures the online representativeness of the panel.

3. *If you provide samples from more than one source: How are the different sample sources blended together to ensure validity? How can this be replicated over time to provide reliability? How do you deal with the possibility of duplication of respondents across sources?*

Repeated registration in the access panel is prevented by means of a technical logarithm in combination with a manual duplicate check based on the characteristics e-mail, city, postcode, first name, surname and password.

4. *Are your sample source(s) used solely for market research? If not, what other purposes are they used for?*

The panel is used solely for market research purposes and is never available for marketing activities of any kind.

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

Due to the diversified recruitment process for the panel, the internet population can be reflected in a representative manner and specific target groups can also be reached. For random samples of target groups that are difficult to reach on the Internet and which cannot be provided via the panel, ad hoc recruitment via our affiliate partners is possible. On the other hand, partner panels can be included after consultation with the customer. Furthermore, respondents can also be recruited offline (for example, by phone) for a study.

6. *If, on a particular project, you need to supplement your sample(s) with sample(s) from other providers, how do you select those partners? Is it your policy to notify a client in advance when using a third party provider?*

If a purchase from a partner is necessary for a project and foreseeable before the start of the project, we will inform our customers of this fact in the offer process. If the need to integrate a panel only becomes obvious in the course of the project, the customer will be informed of this fact immediately.

A long-term business relationship based on trust exists between keyfacts and all partner panels with which it collaborates. Furthermore, all partners adhere to the applicable professional ethics in accordance with ESOMAR and many partners are ISO-certified.

7. *What steps do you take to achieve a representative sample of the target population?*

The respondents to be invited are always selected according to the target group and the survey quotas. As a rule (unless the customer requests otherwise), keyfacts tries to pre-select as many criteria as possible in order to avoid increased frustration among panel members due to frequent screen outs.

If a pre-selection according to target group criteria is not ensured to the full extent, screening criteria as well as quotas are selected according to the target group to ensure that the net sample is definitely representative.

8. *Do you employ a survey router?*

keyfacts does not use a survey router.

9. *If you use a router: Please describe the allocation process within your router. How do you decide which surveys might be considered for a respondent? On what priority basis are respondents allocated to surveys?*

keyfacts does not use a survey router.

10. *If you use a router: What measures do you take to guard against, or mitigate, any bias arising from employing a router? How do you measure and report any bias?*

keyfacts does not use a survey router.

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11. *If you use a router: Who in your company sets the parameters of the router? Is it a dedicated team or individual project managers?*

keyfacts does not use a survey router.

12. *What profiling data is held on respondents? For how many members is such data collected and how is it kept up-to-date?*

All respondents participate in a two-part master data survey. Socio-demographic information is requested as well as approximately 700 other profile information details such as consumer behaviour, interests and travel behaviour. This profile information is stored for all active panel respondents. This ensures that test persons are invited only to surveys for which they are regarded as a member of the relevant target group. The respondent is invited to surveys and considered an active panel member only when the master data survey has been answered fully. In the internal area of the panel home page, the master data survey is always available to the panellists for editing. Following the first three weeks of membership, each panel respondent is then requested at least once per month to update his/her master data.

13. *Please describe your survey invitation process. What is the proposition that people are offered to take part in individual surveys? What information about the project itself is given in the process? Apart from direct invitations to specific surveys (or to a router), what other means of invitation to surveys are respondents exposed to? You should note that not all invitations to participate take the form of e-mails.*

The panellist receives the invitation to the survey via e-mail. The e-mail contains information about the survey length, incentive amount and the link to the survey. If necessary, the respondents are also given information about downloads or special study requirements. The topic of the survey is not specified in the invitation.

14. *Please describe the incentives that respondents are offered for taking part in your surveys. How does this differ by sample source, by interview length, by respondent characteristics?*

The survey respondents receive points. For a ten-minute interview, the respondent receives 100 points, which correspond to a monetary value of €1. If a test person is screened out during the survey or the relevant quota is full, he/she is credited with 1 point as compensation. From a balance of 1,000 points (= €10), it is possible to redeem the credit as a shopping voucher, a cash payment or as a donation to a non-profit organisation. In addition, there are alternating draws every quarter among all new panel members.

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15. What information about a project do you need in order to give an accurate estimate of feasibility using your own resources?

In the offer process, the following information is necessary:

interviewed target group including all exclusion criteria, number of complete interviews, planned quota system of the random sample, length of the survey and – if already known – the planned field time.

16. Do you measure respondent satisfaction? Is this information made available to clients?

At the end of each project, we measure the satisfaction of the panel respondents in terms of the overall satisfaction, topic of the survey, interview length, layout and incentive amount.

Upon request, we provide our customers with the results.

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

Upon completion of projects, ad hoc reporting is performed on request, which includes the following points if necessary:

- invitation to participate and questionnaire
- random sampling methods
- field work period
- methods and results of the data validation
- participation rate and method of calculation
- limitations in ability to extrapolate to the defined population
- subcontracting and the subcontractors, if any

We will also gladly provide a reporting link during the field period. The customer can use it to observe the fill rates of quotas and response rates in real time.

Data Quality and Validation

18. Who is responsible for data quality checks? If it is you, do you have in place procedures to reduce or eliminate undesired within survey behaviours, such as (a) random responding, (b) illogical or inconsistent responding, (c) overuse of item non-response (e.g. "Don't Know") or (d) speeding (too rapid survey completion)? Please describe these procedures.

The quality of the data is important to keyfacts. Therefore, we provide the customer with a revised data set for surveys programmed by keyfacts upon completion of the project. The following options are used to identify fakers and speeders:

- a) Random responses: Use of a quality check question, for example, the inclusion of an item in a matrix question "Click on the scale value 5 here!". Persons who do not click on the 5 at this point are screened out directly in the questionnaire.

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- b) Illogical/inconsistent responses: Upon completion of the project, a manual check of the specified scale values is performed. Persons who have mostly clicked on only one value in the questionnaire are deleted from the data set.
- c) Overuse of item non-response: Upon completion of the project, a manual check of the specified scale values is performed. Persons who have mostly clicked on "Don't know / Not specified" in the questionnaire are deleted from the data set.
- d) Speeding: After calculating the median of the interview length, the data set is adjusted. Usually, persons who are under the 10 percent percentile are deleted from the data set.

keyfacts is glad to contribute the long-standing expertise of its employees in the area of questionnaire development and advises the customer on the optimal design of the questionnaire.

19. What limitations do you observe, if at all, when issuing invitations to surveys? How often can the same individual be contacted to take part in a survey within a specified period whether they respond to the contact or not? How does this vary across your sample sources?

After receiving an invitation to a survey, a panel member is usually sent one reminder about participation via e-mail. In exceptional cases, a second reminder e-mail is also sent, whereby this is sent only for projects with a correspondingly longer field period. No distinction is made between different sample sources.

20. What restrictions, if any, do you impose with regard to the participation in surveys, i.e. how often can the same individual take part in a survey within a specified period? How does this vary across your sample sources? How do you manage this within categories and/or time periods?

The protection of our panel is our top priority. Thus there is a detailed tracking of sent invitation e-mails and of surveys that have started. A maximum of four invitations per month are sent to prevent "professional" panel respondents.

Upon request, we can exclude panellists who have either already participated in a survey on the same topic or have participated for the same customers. We agree on the time frame of these restrictions individually with each customer.

Moreover, a panel member may participate only once in a survey if he has completed it. It is no longer possible to access the same questionnaire again.

21. Do you maintain individual level data such as recent participation history, date of entry, source, etc. on your survey respondents? Are you able to supply your client with a project analysis of such individual level data?

For each panel respondent, an individual history is created and stored in our system. On request, we provide our customers with this data in an anonymised form.

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22. Do you have a confirmation of respondent identity procedure? Do you have procedures to detect fraudulent respondents? Please describe these procedures as they are implemented at sample source registration and/or at the point of entry to a survey or router. If you offer B2B samples, what are the procedures there, if any?

Different automatic and manual test procedures take place during registration in order to identify fraudulent panel respondents or duplicates based on different socio-demographic characteristics as well as, for example, the postcode, city, e-mail address, password and first name and surname, and to delete them from the panel.

Furthermore, other personal characteristics such as bank data are compared at regular intervals to detect fraudulent behaviour and exclude such panellists.

Policies and Compliance

23. Please describe the "opt-in for market research" processes for all your online sample sources.

The double-opt-in/ triple opt-in process is applied when recruiting the panellists. Following registration, each person receives an e-mail with a link which must be clicked to confirm the membership. Only then is another e-mail sent with a confirmation of registration and an invitation to the master data survey. The rules and the privacy policy must be (again) actively agreed to on the home page of the basic survey. With this triple opt-in process, keyfacts adheres to all aspects of data protection law in Germany.

Panellists who do not participate in the first master data survey and who have not actively agreed to the privacy policy are not invited to the surveys and are thus not considered active panellists. If the first master data survey is not completed within 4 weeks, the respondent is completely deleted from the panel.

24. Please provide a link to your Privacy Policy. How is your Privacy Policy provided to your respondents?

The protection of the personal data of our panel members is our top priority. In this context, we not only comply with all statutory regulations, but also have these high standards ISO-certified in accordance with ISO standard 26362.

All our members and non-members can view the latest version of our keypanel privacy policy at <http://keypanel.de/?ID=7> at any time.

Furthermore, the privacy policy for the keyfacts-gmbh.de website can be viewed at <http://keyfacts-gmbh.de/datenschutz/>.

25. Please describe the measures you take to ensure data protection and data security.

The measures described below were implemented to ensure data protection and data security.

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Access control (premises/equipment): Only authorized persons are allowed access to premises containing IT systems. This is achieved by strict access authorization regulations and individual access authorizations. Moreover, careful selection, instruction, and supervision of employed personnel is carried out.

Access control (use of system): This is implemented via a password as well as biometric data-protected authentication of users to determine their authorization to relevant IT systems, the use of stand-alone systems with separate network areas, the logging of logon attempts and accesses, the encryption of sensitive data and use of anti-virus and spyware filters.

Access control (specific data): This is implemented through the use of authorization concepts that are based on functions and roles (admin, user, etc.), the logging of access and misuse attempts, the use of comprehensive backups, the secure, professional destruction and deletion of data carriers, as well as preventing the sending of certain file attachments.

Transfer control: This is done by establishing closed networks, a cryptographic encryption of data to be transferred, the establishment of dedicated data lines, as well as via identity verification of the data receiver and documentation of the transfer.

Input control: This is implemented by detailed logging of the creation, modification and transfer of data, a collection of the access time point of inputs, as well as quality control with regard to the input data.

Project control: In this area, there is a clear demarcation of powers between the contractor and client in the area of order data processing in accordance with Section 11 of the German Federal Data Protection Act (BDSG), contract controlling and contract management in dealing with all service providers, as well as standardised recording and reporting of data processing instructions.

Availability control: We installed an uninterruptible power supply, air-conditioning systems for environmental regulation, and integrated redundant fire and water alarms.

Separation control: Introduction of authorization concepts for regulating access to personal information, as well as the encrypted storage of personal data.

26. What practices do you follow to decide whether online research should be used to present commercially sensitive client data or materials to survey respondents?

keyfacts takes the protection of confidential documents as well as video and audio materials very seriously. This includes the fact that those who work on part of the project or assume certain tasks of the quality management system have the necessary skills and relevant work experience to do so. Moreover, upon entry to surveys, the panel members to agree to keep the displayed material confidential.

In addition, we implement technical measures at the customer's request to prevent screenshots as well as copying and pasting.

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27. Are you certified to any specific quality system? If so, which one (s)?

keyfacts Onlineforschung GmbH has been certified since June 3, 2013 according to ISO standard 26362 "Access panels in market, opinion and social research – Vocabulary and service requirements".

28. Do you conduct online surveys with children and young people? If so, do you adhere to the standards that ESOMAR provides? What other rules or standards do you comply with? Do you adhere in the United States, for example, to COPPA?

Only persons aged 14 and above may be members of our panel according to the applicable law and the ESOMAR standards.

If children are to be interviewed, the invitation is issued only via the parents with a request that the children of the appropriate age complete the survey in the presence of their parents.

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