

How to use quantitative research to generate press coverage





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Original quantitative research is an incredibly effective but often overlooked method for generating press coverage. Many organisations consider it too complicated or expensive without fully appreciating the results it can deliver. In reality, quantitative research is a versatile tool that can fuel PR and marketing plans for many months.

More broadly, quantitative research and the resulting content is a great way to boost your organisation's brand recognition, credibility and – as a result – trust in your organisation.

However, its success depends upon correct execution. A poorly developed or performed survey will likely be dismissed by journalists and could end up being a costly error.

So, before looking at the key components of a successful survey and how to use the resulting content most effectively, let's look at the merits of quantitative research as part of a marketing and PR strategy more generally:

Create your own news

Rather than wait until they have a company announcement such as a new office, product or service, organisations can take control of the news agenda and decide exactly which of their results to share and when. This is very effective for filling gaps when company news might be quiet, and means that a consistent stream of media coverage can be maintained, continuing to build brand recognition and credibility. Furthermore, a good survey intelligently used can generate content for several months.





Demonstrate your organisation's expertise in key topics

Organisations can use research to deep dive into the specific topics and themes they want to talk about. Doing their own research into these areas means they can showcase original insights, boosting their organisation's reputation as an expert in the area.



Make a topic newsworthy

It's getting increasingly challenging to earn media coverage and gain cut-through with top tier publications. A new take or angle on a particular topic can give it the magic it needs to make journalists sit up and take notice.





Use research content across multiple channels

Original data created by quantitative research can be used a number of ways, in addition to generating media coverage from press releases and thought leadership. When done correctly, this means that research can be a very cost-effective source of content. Reports summarising the findings can be used as gated content for lead generation. Company blogs can be written on different aspects of the research, while figures and insights can be turned into social media posts, graphics, infographics, videos and more.



Understanding your market, defining your strategy

Beyond PR and marketing, research can also be an effective way of informing and testing business strategy. By surveying a sample equivalent to an organisation's prospects or stakeholders, it can learn – for example – about their challenges and opportunities as well as how they perceive a brand.



So, how can organisations execute quantitative research successfully and ensure they're extracting maximum value?

1

Stand out from the crowd

Quantitative research isn't new and, when it comes to generating media coverage, journalists receive pitches with new data on a daily basis. For this reason, any new data needs to stand out. Before commissioning a survey, it's important to see what's already been done in the areas that you're looking to cover with your research to ensure you're not simply re-doing someone else's work. AI is a great example here. There have been literally hundreds of surveys conducted in AI and its impact on businesses. To achieve cut through with the media, a new original angle is required to make journalists take notice.

2

Think about repeatable questions

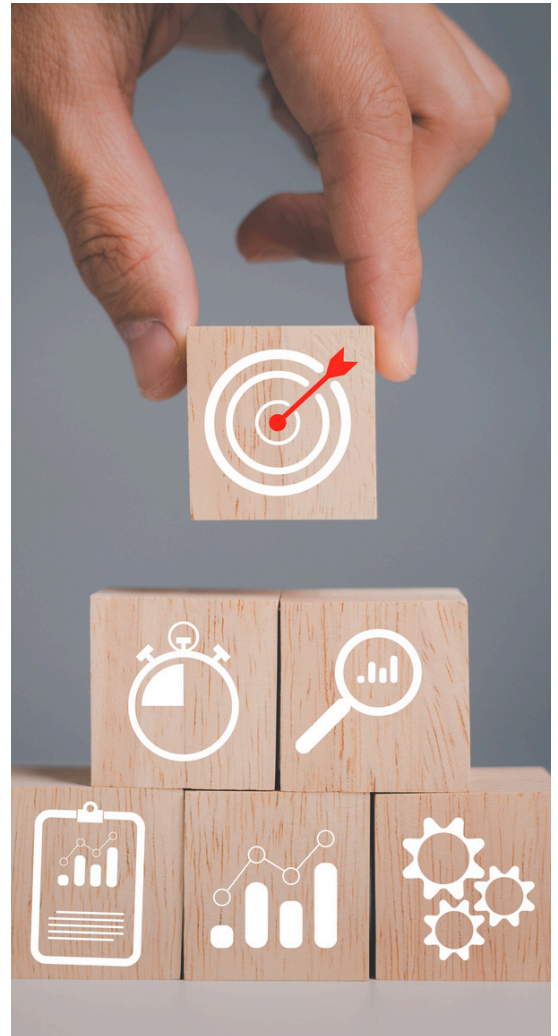
On the flip side, repeating your own survey over several years can be very beneficial. Many organisations successfully rerun the same survey questions year on year to identify and analyse trends by comparing the data. Having two years or more of data enables organisations to create their own annual index on their chosen topic. Over time, journalists and those reading their content will come to associate the organisation conducting the research with the data topic and the timing of it, cementing its reputation as an expert.



3

Make the numbers stack up

Put simply, a strong sample size is a must. Who you are surveying – including their geographic location, whether they are consumers or businesses and their seniority – will impact how many respondents you need to achieve a strong data sample. Working with a reputable market research agency will ensure not only that your sample is robust but also that your questionnaire is worded correctly and meets the necessary standards to achieve results. A good sign is that the agency is a member of the Market Research Society and other similar organisations.



4

Start from the headline and work backwards

Many organisations worry that the research they conduct simply won't say what they want it to – and of course that it always a risk. No one can ever know what the results will be until the survey is conducted. However, by reverse-engineering your survey from the headlines you want to generate – and working with a reputable market research agency – you can ensure that the questions are structured accordingly. Similarly, having a good spread of questions on different angles, carefully phrased, will ensure that you have multiple options when it comes to developing your PR and comms plan.



Case study: Davies Group

Davies Group is a professional services and technology firm which helps its clients improve their technology, processes and services. Following the acquisition of a consulting firm, Davies needed to extend its reputation beyond the insurance sector to other areas of financial services (FS).



CRC delivered a quantitative research project to fuel Davies' PR activities across a number of months. A wide-ranging survey of 500 decision-makers in FS measured perceptions of performance and confidence, as well as opinions on specific challenges such as the impact of Consumer Duty regulation, compliance penalties and talent retention.

The survey fuelled four press releases and three thought leadership articles, which were gradually released to the press over the course of seven months. 41 pieces of media

coverage were achieved including in City AM, FT Adviser and Financial Reporter, enabling Davies Group to establish its reputation with FS organisations. In addition, the resulting data was used across Davies' marketing activity including in social media and blog content.

If you need help bringing your quantitative research ideas to fruition and would like help from an agency that has developed and executed hundreds of surveys, contact City Road Communications [here](#).



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