EMI RESEARCH SOLUTIONS

EMI's answers to

ESOMAR's 37 Questions

to help buyers of online sample

ESOMAR's 37 questions offers a framework for buyers to use when evaluating different sample providers. The questions and the suppliers' responses are meant to form a basis for a conversation between buyer and sample provider, and to help determine if there is a fit with research objectives.

EMI Research Solutions is proud to provide clear, detailed answers to ESOMAR's 37 questions, helping you understand the process how we source, manage, and vet our sample network, our data quality measures, and more.

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RESEARCH SOLUTIONS

Table of Contents

COMPANY PROFILE

Company Profile

1. What experience does your company have in providing online samples for market research? How long have you been providing this service? Do you also provide similar services for other uses such as direct marketing? If so, what proportion of your work is for market research?

EMI Research Solutions was founded in 1999 as an online strategic sample consultant to the market research industry. We have never owned a panel and have built a network of over 150 vetted online panels to supply respondents to research companies and organizations worldwide. We have a strict network entry as less than 30% of panel applicants are entered into our preferred network. We have helped many panels build and improve their services by sharing our 20+ years of learnings in the industry.

EMI has spent the last 23 years operating as a sample sourcing consultancy for the online, quantitative research space. In this time, we have rigorously vetted over 1,000 sample sources with a less than 30% acceptance rate into our stable of providers.

To date, EMI has completed more than 30,000 research projects across many verticals, including CPG, Healthcare, IT, and Financial Services across more than 82 countries. Currently, EMI services about two-thirds of the Insights Association's Top 50 companies and numerous end-users of research.

One hundred percent of our work is for the marketing research, ResTech, and insights industries and we do not provide similar services for any other uses.

2. Do you have staff with responsibility for developing and monitoring the performance of the sampling algorithms and related automated functions who also have knowledge and experience in this area? What sort of training in sampling techniques do you provide to your frontline staff?

It is important to know if the provider's offerings have been designed by and are monitored by staff with knowledge of basic principles of sampling. This may be useful at the sample design stage as well as during fulfilment when quotas become difficult to fill or when weighting may be required. Ditto for any frontline staff who may serve as your main point of contact with the sample provider.

Our Director of Network Partners and Quality position is 100% focused on managing our entire network and all aspects of quality assurance. Additionally, our Quality Council, an internal cross-functional team, is responsible for ensuring that the entire company has knowledge and expertise in current and future trends in sampling. Our Chief Insights Officer is responsible for understanding basic and advanced sampling techniques, as well as the behavioral and attitudinal biases of our network. Our robust on-boarding and ongoing training processes ensure the staff is knowledgeable. We also attend marketing research and sample-focused conferences, are involved in and part of industry committees in the Insights Association, AAPOR, ESOMAR, and CASE (Council for Advancement of Sampling Expertise), and hold advisory board positions including the University of Georgia's Master of Marketing Research program.

3. What other services do you offer? Do you cover sample-only, or do you offer a broad range of data collection and analysis services?

Depending on your company's capabilities, you may wish to work with a one-stop shop that can host your survey, produce basic tabulations, code open ends, and so on. There may be time and cost savings with this approach.

While our company focus has always been strategic consultants in sample, we also have capabilities in screener and questionnaire design, survey programming and hosting, data processing, coding, and tabbing. Our strategic blending is unique and based upon our 10 years of research-on-research and feel it is best practice in the industry. We have built a service around it, called IntelliBlend®.

We also provide recruitment support for online qualitative and quali-quant methodologies, such as IDI's, IHUTs and community builds.

SAMPLE SOURCES & RECRUITING

Sample Sources & Recruiting

What this section is about:

Answers to the questions in this section will help you understand the types of sample available from different sample providers in the market and the sources they rely on. This will help you evaluate the quality of the sample being offered, whether it is suitable for measuring change over time, and whether there are any specific constraints you need to consider when using it. It will also allow you to understand whether the sample provider is drawing the sample from its own sources or aggregating sources from other providers. We recommend that you first identify the sample types being offered and then ask the relevant questions for all sources. Broadly speaking, there are two models of sample sources and recruitment:

Panels

These are databases of potential participants who declare that they will cooperate for future data collection if selected, generally in exchange for a reward/incentive. This includes traditional access panels, co-branded panels, or opt-in databases of individuals who agreed to complete research projects and also undertake other nonmarket research activities (watch ads, download an app, complete marketing offers, etc., also known as loyalty programs, or rewards communities within GPT (get paid to) sites.) Loyalty card and subscription databases are included here if there is a continuous relationship with members who understand the commitment asked of them.

Intercepts

This includes intercepts from offer walls, affiliate networks, social media or other platforms to drive traffic to a survey. Intercept is an approach where potential participants are asked to take a survey for a reward while they are engaged in another activity such as playing an online game, reading news, or some other online activity. Intercepted participants may be previously unknown to the sample provider or may have been pre-identified and profiled through a prior survey experience.

4. **Using the broad classifications above, from what sources of online sample do you derive participants?**

   Sample providers may deliver sample from a single source, such as their own proprietary panel, or other panels. Or they may leverage a range of technologies and platforms to aggregate/blend participants from a combination of sample sources. Some providers may do both. Clarity about the sources being used will help you to understand what type of sample is being offered. This answer might differ from country to country and from project to project.

EMI leverages only double-opt-in, dedicated market research panel sample. Acting as a sample sourcing consultant, we engage each source directly and in an intentional and strategic manner.

We work with our clients and their study objectives and design a sample plan that best fits their needs, and all of the sources of online sample described above are in our network. Our sample solution is custom for every client and body of work, and we are transparent with the sources we utilize. A strategic blend of sources is the ideal way to ensure representivity and reduce bias in survey research. Our blends are based upon our historical research-on-research that identifies attitudinal and behavioral differences in sample providers.

EMI is not biased to a proprietary panel and is fully transparent with each client about our model as well as the sources being leveraged for their study. Prior to being accepted into EMI's list of approved panels, each panel must pass our Partner Assessment Process, a detailed evaluation and series of tests related to respondent behavior, respondent data quality, panel management practices, client service satisfaction, feasibility, and other factors. In addition, some panels may be further tested on live research projects before being accepted. Over the last 15 years, having evaluated over 1000 panel sources, less than 30% of panels have met our strict standards to become approved partners.

5. **Which of these sources are proprietary or exclusive and what is the percent share of each in the total sample provided to a buyer?**

   (Assume proprietary to mean that the sample provider owns the asset. Assume exclusive to mean that the sample provider has an exclusive agreement to manage/provide access to sample originally collected by another entity.) This question will help you to understand whether the vendor is 'running' the source or 'marketing' the source. Running the source implies a closer relationship with panelists and a deeper knowledge of recruitment techniques. This may also help you to understand whether the sample is exclusively available from this provider.

We only work with our partners' proprietary sample and are 100% transparent in the sample we offer. We believe that the ideal sample plan includes a strategic blend of proprietary sample sources and work with sample partners that provide all of these options and determine the ideal blend of sample based upon the clients' specifications and objectives.

6. What recruitment channels are you using for each of the sources you have described? Is the recruitment process 'open to all' or by invitation only? Are you using probabilistic methods? Are you using affiliate networks and referral programs and in what proportions? How does your use of these channels vary by geography?

Understanding the method of recruitment and whether the recruitment is by invitation only will help you to understand the quality of the sample and how it may be used.

Our sources create a diverse base of options from which we can strategically blend to help to ensure representative sample and remove any individual sample provider's bias. We have a deep and thorough understanding of the recruitment processes and how they differ among the panels in our network and feel that all panels have strengths. We leverage different panels' strengths depending on the geography and sample target, among other factors.

Part of our Partner Assessment Process includes evaluating a panel's recruitment process to be sure we understand not only the mechanics of it, but also how the particular process can impact the type of respondents in the panel, as well as the attitudes and behaviors of the panelist.

7. What form of validation do you use in recruitment to ensure that participants are real, unique, and are who they say they are? Describe this both in terms of the practical steps you take within your own organization and the technologies you are using. Please try to be as specific and quantify as much as you can.

Understanding the level of recruitment validation undertaken by the sample provider will help you to mitigate effects of fraud in your projects. Working with providers who have fully developed strategies and are using up-to-date detection technologies is recommended.

EMI does not own a proprietary panel. Understanding and evaluating the validation techniques of our panels is a key part of our Partner Assessment Process. By pairing the evaluation discovery of 1,000 panels over the past 20+ years with a quantifiable Quality Optimization Rating for sample field, EMI has intimate knowledge of the effects of different validation techniques on in-field quality performance. We also utilize a robust suite of quality products including Research Defender to detect bots and our proprietary SWIFT (*Sampling With Integrated Fingerprinting Technology*) platform to ensure their uniqueness.

8. Using the broad classifications above, from what sources of online sample do you derive participants?

Summarize, by source, the proportion of sample accessing surveys by mobile app, email or other specified means. By understanding the domain/app and method the sample provider is using with members, you will gain an indication of the extent of activity with those members and the quality of their relationship with the sample.

Our sample sources utilize a wide range of methods, apps, and domains to allow respondents to access a survey. We feel strongly that a respondent should have the ability to access all surveys via the method that best suits them – either via an email, a portal, an app notification, or other methods.

The proportion of respondents accessing the survey via each method varies based upon numerous factors, including country, sample target, LOI, whether the survey is designed to be mobile-first or not, survey topic, survey complexity, etc. We leverage the ideal sample design based upon these factors.

9. Which model(s) do you offer to deliver sample? Managed service, self-serve, or API integration?

Sample provision is offered through three main channels: managed service, self-serve, and API (Application Planning Interface) integrations. In a self-serve model, buyers are given access to a platform which they can use to specify the audience they want to access, and manage all the steps of a research project, from sample design to launch to fieldwork management to closing. In a managed service model, sample providers will provide that service. API integrations are the mechanics which allow sample providers, buyers and data collection platforms to automate some aspects of the process.

EMI specializes in providing best-in-class managed service sample, the backbone of which is our world-class research management team that works as an extension of our client's team to provide a single point of contact who utilizes responsiveness, creativity and flexibility to help manage the project and navigate any potential issues.

We utilize our proprietary sample management platform, SWIFT, to seamlessly connect our clients' surveys with the appropriate sample audiences detailed in the custom sample plan. We do this while ensuring our client receives the highest-quality data with our built-in data quality measures.

We provide our clients with the ability to access our approved network of providers through our DIY self-serve platform, Connector. Powered By SWIFT, Connector allows clients to access thousands of high-quality respondents from our API-connected sample providers, all of whom have passed our stringent Partner Assessment Process.

10. If offering intercepts, or providing access to more than one source, what level of transparency do you offer over the composition of your sample (sample sources, sample providers included in the blend). Do you let buyers control which sources of sample to include in their projects, and if so how? Do you have any integration mechanisms with third-party sources offered?

It is well documented that different sources can produce different results. Consistency in source blending can be vital for tracking studies or other intersurvey comparisons. The use of a single, narrow source, such as a single supermarket's loyalty scheme, may result in unintended bias.

EMI provides full and complete transparency to our clients regarding the sample providers we use on each study. We are happy to share the partners, the allocations, the blends, how respondents access the survey, or any other information to our clients to ensure the project is successful. Buyers can control which sources to include in their sample, either via our DIY tool, Connector, or through our managed services option. We 100% agree with the point discussing how different sources can produce different results and we have built a solution to reduce this bias called IntelliBlend®.

We agree that different sample sources can produce different results and have seen this firsthand through our ongoing research-on-research on the sample industry. We have been conducting this research for over 10 years and have seen not only how sample sources differ from one another, but that they change over time. To help mitigate this, we have developed IntelliBlend, a best-in-class sample design methodology to ensure consistent, unbiased data, and ultimately, confident business decisions. With IntelliBlend, three or more sample providers are selected and blended in an intentional and controlled manner to complement one another, while reducing the overall sample bias and any potential behavioral or attitudinal impacts a panel can have.

IntelliBlend takes strategic sample blending to its highest potential to provide the most representative and accurate demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal data in a clients' custom sample plan.

Each strategic blend is customized depending on the client specifications.

11. Of the sample sources you have available, how would you describe the suitability of each for different research applications? For example, is there sample suitable for product testing or other recruit/recall situations where the buyer may need to go back again to the same sample? Is the sample suitable for shorter or longer questionnaires? For mobile-only or desktop-only questionnaires? Is it suitable to recruit for communities? For online focus groups?

By understanding the constraints of the sample being offered, you can understand if the actual sample available from the provider meets your particular research needs and changes any of the answers given previously to this section.

We have a selective yet broad number of approved panels with whom we work; and we customize a solution for each client or project. Yes, different sample providers are better at different business objectives, and we utilize certain sample sources for product testing, studies that a recontact is necessary, qualitative research, or for other business objectives.

We use our unbiased knowledge of the sample landscape to leverage the best blend of sources to meet the study objectives, and we customize that based upon country, LOI, whether the study is mobile-friendly, the IR, sample target, etc.

SAMPLING & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Sampling & Project Management

What this section is about:

Answers to the questions in this section will help you understand the processes and procedures that are undertaken to provide you with a sample of participants for your survey. You should understand what biases may be inherent in, or as a result of, the approaches taken and the likely severity of those biases.

12. Briefly describe your overall process from invitation to survey completion. What steps do you take to achieve a sample that "looks like" the target population? What demographic quota controls, if any, do you recommend?

The sampling process (i.e., how individuals are selected or allocated from the sample sources) may affect how random the sample is from within the sources proposed. Quota controls are commonly used to make samples look like the target population and, if done without thought, may be less than optimal for your particular project.

We take numerous other steps to ensure the sample looks like the target population. We customize a sample plan for each study ensuring the sample blend best ensures representativity by determining the sample providers that are ideal for the study.

Demographic and other quotas are determined by the study objectives and sample plan. We recommend a discussion between the client and suppliers to understand the benefits and risk of applying quotas or other methods to control sample.

13. What profiling information do you hold on at least 80% of your panel members plus any intercepts known to you through prior contact? How does this differ by the sources you offer? How often is each of those data points updated? Can you supply these datapoints as appends to the data set? Do you collect this profiling information directly or is it supplied by a third-party?

Targeting samples based on pre-existing profiles increases efficiency. Some bias may result depending on the precise questions asked, when they were asked, and to how many people. Appending existing information reduces the burden on the panelists in the survey itself.

EMI's unique, in-depth level of knowledge on all of our suppliers allows us to custom fit targeting and profiling information to the study itself. We frequently select a panel blend based on their profiling capabilities and profiling depth in order to increase IR and survey efficiency and economy.

14. What information do you need about a project in order to provide an estimate of feasibility? What, if anything, do you do to give upper or lower boundaries around these estimates?

A sample provider failing to meet your sample requirements may require use of additional sample providers, adding time and complexity to the project. Trackers should be assessed in the light of any exclusion periods you may want to introduce that will reduce the available sample for subsequent waves.

At a minimum, we need to know the sample target, the incidence rate, the length of interview, any demographic or other quotas, when (ideally) the study should be completed, and if there is a recontact. Anticipated device combability and languages for translations, at least as options, is also ideal.

EMI cannot field a study below 1% incidence rate after targeting and does not recommend fielding studies longer than 30 minutes in length.

15. What do you do if the project proves impossible for you to complete in field? Do you inform the sample buyer as to who you would use to complete the project? In such circumstances, how do you maintain and certify third-party sources/sub-contractors?

There may be good reasons why certain sample providers should not be used. For example, the provider may not have experience of operating in the geography relevant to your project.

We are 100% transparent in our communication with the client and provide constant fieldwork updates. We will provide recommendations to updating the screening criteria, or otherwise, to meet the clients' needs. We also want to understand why the project did not meet expectations, such as an IR lower than expected, LOI higher than expected, high dropout rate, etc. in order to improve in the future.

16. Do you employ a survey router or any yield management techniques? If yes, please describe how you go about allocating participants to surveys. How are potential participants asked to participate in a study? Please specify how this is done for each of the sources you offer.

Biases of varying severity may arise from prioritization in the order in which surveys are presented to participants or the methods used to allocate a participant to one of the various surveys for which they may appear to qualify.

EMI does not employ a survey router. We do work with some panel providers that do route surveys via various methods. However, we are always transparent with the client.

17. Do you set limits on the amount of time a participant can be in the router before they qualify for a survey?

An excessive amount of time spent in a router answering screening questions may cause a participant to be become fatigued, potentially impacting data quality.

EMI does not employ a survey router. We do work with some panel providers that do route surveys via various methods. However, we are always transparent with the client.

18. What information about a project is given to potential participants before they choose whether to take the survey or not? How does this differ by the sources you offer?

The information about the survey (and associated rewards) may influence the type of people who agree to take part, creating the potential for bias.

Our partner network utilizes various methods to obtain the best response rate and engagement among its members or panelists. Typically, the subject of the research is blinded and only the length of interview and incentive amount is provided to the respondent to remove any biases. There are cases where more information is provided, but that is not standard.

19. Do you allow participants to choose a survey from a selection of available surveys? If so, what are they told about each survey that helps them to make that choice?

The level of detail and the nature of the information given about a project may influence who responds, creating the potential for bias.

Our partner network utilizes various methods to obtain the best response rate and engagement among its members or panelists. Varying information is provided to respondents to accomplish this.

20. What ability do you have to increase (or decrease) incentives being offered to potential participants (or sub-groups of participants) during the course of a survey? If so, can this be flagged at the participant level in the dataset?

The reward or incentive system may have an impact on the reasons people participate in a specific project and these effects can result in bias in the sample.

EMI does not own a proprietary panel and does not pay panel respondents directly. Our suggestion is to avoid adjusting incentives in field, but if we do make that decision with our client to do so, we track it and certainly can flag the respondents who receive the different amount.

21. Do you measure participant satisfaction at the individual project level? If so, can you provide normative data for similar projects (by length, by type, by subject, by target group)?

Participant satisfaction may be an indicator of willingness to take future surveys. Participant reactions to your survey from self-reported feedback or from an analysis of the points where participants drop out of the survey may enhance your understanding of the survey results and lead to improvements in questionnaire design for future surveys.

A majority of the panels EMI partners with collect customer satisfaction surveys from their respondents, and this information is available for all clients upon request. We can also advise clients on how to incorporate a short respondent satisfaction survey into their questionnaire.

22. Do you provide a debrief report about a project after it has completed? If yes, can you provide an example?

The level of detail and the nature of the information given about a project may influence who responds, creating the potential for bias.

EMI's standard process includes a full and detailed debrief meeting after each first project with a client, as well as randomly throughout the client relationship. The debrief measures the project's success on expectations related to bidding, timing, project management, budgeting, client service, and meeting the project objective(s), and subsequent improvements/changes are made based upon their feedback.

EMI can also provide project details such as click rate, incidence rate, completion rate, and other project information upon request.

DATA QUALITY & VALIDATION

Data Quality & Valdation

What this section is about:

This section focuses on the quality of the in-survey data. In-survey data quality includes project level data validity and representativeness, survey-taking behaviours, sample blends, participant characteristics, and project level data health and audit practices.

23. How often can the same individual participate in a survey? How does this vary across your sample sources? What is the mean and maximum amount of time a person may have already been taking surveys before they entered this survey? How do you manage this?

Answers to this question may alert you about the potential for bias due to the participation of professional participants, simple survey fatigue, or category bias.

Each panel within EMI's network utilizes a different process to manage the frequency of survey invitations a respondent receives. We work with each partner to understand the frequency and to ensure that if a respondent does take multiple surveys that they are not included in surveys in the same category over any requested time frames. We also have the ability to block respondents from future waves of studies if requested.

24. What data do you maintain on individual participants such as recent participation history, date(s) of entry, source/channel, etc? Are you able to supply buyers with a project analysis of such individual level data? Are you able to append such data points to your participant records?

You may wish to append data that enables you to analyze and trend data to look for potential biases based on participation levels, sources, tenure, and other data the provider may hold.

Upon entry to each survey conducted through our SWIFT platform, participants are assigned a unique identifier that can be shared with the participants originating panel for the purposes of reinvites, exclusions or appends. Data points available for append vary by source.

25. Please describe your procedures for confirmation of participant identity at the project level. Please describe these procedures as they are implemented at the point of entry to a survey or router?

Given the widely acknowledged risk of fraud in online research, buyers should understand identity and fraud controls, not just at recruitment, but at the point of survey entry. It is essential that there be measures in place to ensure that participants are who they say they are and that the member or email account has not been hacked, is not a duplicate with other accounts from other channels or panels, and whether or not the account is shared by other members of the household.

EMI's proprietary sample management platform, SWIFT, has a built-in quality module which allows us to customize our utilization of several industry leading quality assurance tools to detect and eliminate more fraud, bots, and duplications.

SWIFT's Quality Module Capabilities:

- Industry-leading digital fingerprinting and de-duplication
- Fully integrated with Research Defender's advanced bot and fraud technology
- Next-gen CAPTCHA
- Geo-IP blocking

26. How do you manage source consistency and blend at the project level? With regard to trackers, how do you ensure that the nature and composition of sample sources remain the same over time? Do you have reports on blends and sources that can be provided to buyers? Can source be appended to the participant data records?

Participant source is a known contributor to data representativeness. Knowing all the sources used for the project, especially for tracking and longitudinal research, and that the proportions from each source are known and reportable over time, will allow you to understand any population biases that might exist.

IntelliBlend® is EMI's unique methodology of strategically blending sample sources in an intentional and controlled approach in order to deliver the most representative and accurate demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal data. This approach includes double opt-in research panels but may also include non-traditional sources such as social media, which is utilized in a limited and controlled manner. IntelliBlend can vary from project-to-project based on the needs of the research. The unique blend is developed by leveraging proprietary research-on-research data as well as over 20 years of sample experience. For ongoing work, the custom sample plan is replicated from wave-to-wave utilizing EMI's sample management platform, SWIFT, which enforces sample source quotas, thus ensuring data consistency.

27. Please describe your participant/member quality tracking, along with any health metrics you maintain on members/participants, and how those metrics are used to invite, track, quarantine, and block people from entering the platform, router, or a survey. What processes do you have in place to compare profiled and known data to in-survey responses?

Buyers and providers often work together to track individual survey response quality, so buyers should understand what data the provider uses to confirm survey answers, block or remove a member, and how to enable that information exchange.

Since we do not own a proprietary panel, EMI has designed an industry leading quality measurement calculation, the Quality Optimization Rating, used to evaluate the quality of the sample that we provide to our clients. Quality Optimization Rating was developed to ensure that EMI's team of expert consultants had access to data driven insights to craft solid sampling strategies for the most optimal quality experience for both our panels and customers. The rating considers pre-survey traffic health, in-survey participant behaviors, and post survey data validity consistency. This metric aids in monitoring and tracking over time how well a panel's supply performs within Consumer, B2B, and Healthcare work, both domestically and globally. These metrics are evaluated per study and at an overall account level. Panels that do not meet our quality rating standards are removed from our network.

28. For work where you program, host, and deliver the survey data, what processes do you have in place to reduce or eliminate undesired in-survey behaviours, such as (a) random responding, (b) illogical or inconsistent responding, (c) overuse of item nonresponse (e.g.,“ Don't Know”) (d) inaccurate or inconsistent responding, (e) incomplete responding, or (f) too rapid survey completion?

Data cleansing methods are often built into survey programs and platforms. Some of those methods are set up to automatically remove responses, while others are optional or manual. Understanding what tools will be used will aid buyers in understanding how much cleaning they should plan to do once they receive the final dataset, and what biases might be introduced by automated cleaning practices.

EMI provides consultation to our clients in the survey design phase and suggests that screeners are written as if you're sampling the general population. We recommend that open-ended responses are included along with trap question/red herring or reverse scaling questions. This can help screen out bots or other fraudulent respondents. In-survey termination points are implemented where multiple inconsistencies are detected in real time. Data records are also flagged for completion under one-third the median length of interview.

Our data cleaning process uses multiple techniques of applying software/algorithms and human review to identify bad responders. Behaviors evaluated to identify poor quality data include but are not limited to:

- Survey Response Consistency
- Patterns or Clickthrough Behavior
- Duplicate Reponses Identification
- Keystroke Analysis
- Machine Response Detection (Bots)
- Inattentiveness

POLICIES & COMPLIANCE

Policies & Compliance

What this section is about:

Sample providers, buyers, and their clients are subject to data protection and related information security requirements imposed by data protection laws and regulations. In addition, they may be subject to laws and regulations that may impact incentives paid to participants.

These laws and regulations vary by jurisdiction with different laws and regulations applying in different countries or states within countries and are generally interpreted based on where the participant resides.

Applicable data protection laws and regulations include, but are not limited to: the Act on the Protection of Personal Information or APPI (Japan); the Australian Privacy Act (Australia); the California Consumer Protection Act or CCPA (state of California in the United States); the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act or COPPA (United States); the Data Protection Act (United Kingdom); amendments regarding data localisation requirements to the Data Protection Act (Russian Federation); the General Data Protection Law (Brazil); the EU General Data Protection Regulation or EU-GDPR (EU/ EEA); the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act or HIPAA (United States); the Graham-Leach Bliley Act or GLBA (United States); and PIPEDA (Canada). AB 2257 (the state of California in the United States) is an example of law and regulation related to employment which may impact incentives paid to participants.

Information security frameworks and standards include, but are not limited to COBIT, HITRUST, ISO 27001, the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and SOC 2.

Answers to the questions in this section can help you understand the data protection, information security and compliance policies, procedures and practices that a sample provider has implemented.

29. Please provide the link to your participant privacy notice (sometimes referred to as a privacy policy) as well as a summary of the key concepts it addresses.

(Note: If your company uses different privacy notices for different products or services, please provide an example relevant to the products or services covered in your response to this question).

A privacy notice is required by various data protection laws and regulations as well some market research industry codes. A privacy notice discloses information about the personal data that a sample provider collects and processes and the way that that personal data is used, disclosed, and managed. A review of a sample provider's privacy notice can help you understand their procedures and practices related to personal data and the degree to which they comply with applicable laws, regulations and industry codes.

https://emi-rs.com/privacy-policy/

30. How do you comply with key data protection laws and regulations that apply in the various jurisdictions in which you operate? How do you address requirements regarding consent or other legal bases for the processing of personal data? How do you address requirements for data breach response, cross-border transfer, and data retention? Have you appointed a data protection officer?

As noted above, buyers and sample providers are subject to data protection and related information security requirements imposed by data protection laws and regulations, other laws and regulations as well as clients. Understanding a sample provider's compliance position with these laws and regulations is essential.

EMI Research is an active member of the Insights Association along with several research governing and influential organizations. We comply with research standards and guidelines, including but not limited to GDPR and CCPA. Our Quality Council meets regularly to discuss ongoing Consumer Privacy and Data Security regulations and initiatives to ensure that our policies and procedures related to privacy and data security are compliant with all relevant laws and best practices. The Quality Council is comprised of members representing all departments of our organization who review each teams' roles and responsibilities across functions regarding data breaches, and privacy escalations. We employ third-party legal resources to ensure that we are compliant with all applicable laws and regulations. We also require that all panels, prior to admittance to our network, acknowledge compliance with state specific and national regulations that apply to their databases.

31. How can participants provide, manage and revise consent for the processing of their personal data? What support channels do you provide for participants?

Responses should address the sample sources you wholly own, as well as those owned by other parties to whom you provide access.

Consent for the collection and processing of personal data has long been required by market research industry codes. It is also explicitly required by some data protection laws and regulations. Some data protection laws and regulations, including EU-GDPR and CCPA as examples, also provide for access rights for participants to correct, update, or delete their data. Implementation of a participant support channel is also required by ISO 20252 (ISO 20252:2019: Market, Opinion and Social Research, Including Insights and Data Analytics – Vocabulary and Service Requirements).

We do not maintain a database of members; however, respondents can escalate privacy concerns on a survey level via help links to EMI that we communicate back to their panel owner.

32. How do you track and comply with other applicable laws and regulations, such as those that might impact the incentives paid to participants?

As stated above, buyers and sample providers are subject to laws and regulations such as those that may impact incentives paid to participants.

We are constantly monitoring industry regulation trends and employ third-party legal resources to ensure that we are compliant with all applicable laws and regulations. We also require that all panels, prior to admittance to our network, acknowledge compliance with state specific and national regulations that apply to their databases.

33. What is your approach to collecting and processing the personal data of children and young people? Do you adhere to standards and guidelines provided by ESOMAR or GRBN member associations? How do you comply with applicable data protection laws and regulations?

Some data protection laws and regulations (for example COPPA and EU-GDPR) impose specific requirements with the respect to the collection and processing of the personal data of children and young people. These requirements include specific age definitions, as well as a requirement for verifiable parental consent. See the ESOMAR & GRBN Guideline on Research and Data Analytics with Children, Young People, and Other Vulnerable Individuals for further discussion.

EMI follows the guidelines set by ESOMAR and any country legislation in terms of conducting research with those under the age of 18. In many cases, we must obtain parental permission. Further, as part of being accepted into the EMI network, each panel is required to confirm that they comply with state, regional, and national laws in respect to working with children and other vulnerable people. EMI is committed to the protection of children and other vulnerable people and, as such, is a member of the Insights Association and ESOMAR. We work with our partners to determine our ability to conduct research with those under 18 on a case-by-case basis.

EMI Research Solutions only works with panel providers that follow all COPPA and ESOMAR guidelines when gathering data from minors.

34. Do you implement "data protection by design" (sometimes referred to as "privacy by design") in your systems and processes? If so, please describe how.

"Data protection by design" (which may also be referred to as "privacy by design") is an approach that requires the consideration of privacy and data protection issues at the design phase of any system, service, product, or process and then throughout the lifecycle. Understanding a sample provider's use or lack of use of "data protection by design" can help you understand its data protection compliance posture.

EMI Research Solutions is an active member of Insights Association along with several research governing & influential organizations. We comply with to research standards and guidelines, including but not limited to GDPR and CCPA. Our Quality Council meets regularly to discuss ongoing consumer privacy and data security regulations and initiatives to ensure that our policies and procedures related to privacy and data security are compliant with all relevant laws and best practices.

35. What are the key elements of your information security compliance program? Please specify the framework(s) or auditing procedure(s) you comply with or certify to. Does your program include an asset-based risk assessment and internal audit process

Information security frameworks such as ISO 27001 or SOC 2 are accepted and recognized frameworks for information security compliance. Understanding which framework(s) a sample provider uses or if a sample provider doesn't use such a framework can help you understand the sample provider's information security compliance posture.

EMI works with a managed service IT provider who manages our information security, IT infrastructure, and network. Our provider routinely audits our information security, while monitoring our overall network 24/7 for any breaches. A more detailed account of our information security practices, incident response plans, storage and back-up processes, and network security can be provided upon request.

36. Do you certify to or comply with a quality framework such as ISO 20252?

> ***ISO 20252 is an international quality standard recognised by many market research industry associations. In addition to requirement for a system to manage research processes, it explicitly addresses requirements for data protection and information security compliance.***

We do not currently maintain any ISO certifications, but we are aware of all of the requirements and abide by them.

Other quality initiatives and committee affiliations EMI Research Solutions is a part of include:

- AAPOR (committee to redefine online response rates)
- CASE (founding member and part of core team)
- ESOMAR
- Insights Association (incoming President of North Central Chapter)
- Wire (Cincinnati city co-lead)
- Formerly on SampleCon Board of Advisors
- UGA MMR Board of Advisors

METRICS

Metrics

What this section is about:

This section lists common sample and data health metrics. Reviewing metrics periodically can serve as the basis for a conversation with sample providers about consistency and reliability, as well as whether the sample is appropriate for the population and business question being examined. Unexpected or unexplained shifts in metrics may also indicate the potential for bias or error. While not all of these metrics are required and there are no benchmarks on the "right answers," providing transparency over time will create a meaningful dialogue about quality and utility.

37. Which of the following are you able to provide to buyers, in aggregate and by country and source?

Please include a link or attach a file of a sample report for each of the metrics you use.

01. Average qualifying or completion rate, trended by month?

Yes

02. Percent of paid completes rejected per month/project, trended by month?

Yes

03. Percent of members/accounts removed/quarantined, trended by month?

Not applicable

04. Percent of paid completes from 0-3 months tenure, trended by month?

Not applicable

05. Percent of paid completes from smartphones, trended by month?

Yes

06. Percent of paid completes from owned/branded member relationships versus intercept participants, trended by month?

Not applicable

07. Average number of dispositions (survey attempts, screenouts, and completes) per member, trended by month (potentially by cohort)?

Yes

08. Average number of paid completes per member, trended by month (potentially by cohort)?

Yes

09. Active unique participants in the last 30 days?

Yes

10. Active unique 18-24 male participants in the last 30 days?

Not applicable

11. Maximum feasibility in a specific country with nat rep quotas, seven days in field, 100% incidence, 10-minute interview?

Yes

12. Percent of quotas that reached full quota at time of delivery, trended by month?

Yes

We track and internally report completion rate and dispositions (completes, terms, over quotas, duplication, fraud & removals) by panel, customer, device, country, and classification. Member and participant level data, while accessible, is managed by our network of suppliers directly.

About EMI

EMI Research Solutions is a leading online sample and quantitative research provider. With more than 20 years of experience operating in the market research industry, we provide you with unbiased solutions that connect you with the right sample that best fits your project and needs rather than trying to make your project fit a specific panel.

We provide the highest quality, most cost-effective results in the shortest amount of time—ensuring you get the best sample for your projects.

Our world-class project management team works with you as an extension of your team, providing you a single point of contact, utilizing responsiveness, creativity and flexibility to help you navigate any issues. Our proprietary sample management platform, SWIFT, seamlessly connects your survey with the appropriate sample audience while ensuring you get only high-quality data with our built-in data quality measures.

EMI's unique combination of expertise, knowledge, and white-glove service allows us to be the premier sample and market research consultancy—getting it done every time without compromise.

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