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10 “No-Travel” Qualitative Research Ideas to Keep Insights Flowing

COVID-19 will undoubtedly disrupt your personal life as well as your business initiatives. But, helping clients navigate disruption is what Escalent does best. That’s why we’re sharing some of our no-travel fielding and engagement approaches to keep your projects moving forward at home in America and in major global markets.

Please know that we are monitoring customer sentiment on our clients’ behalf and will reach out immediately if we think concerns over COVID-19 are—or could—impact research-based opinions and results.

In the meantime, whether you need near-term solutions to pivot to COVID-19 challenges or are simply looking for remote qualitative research options, we’ve got you covered.





Asynchronous Approaches

These approaches allow respondents to participate in research as their schedules permit:

Online Discussions are individuals or groups of participants engaging with our moderators—and each other—over a series of days via a secure, online bulletin board platform. Participants can engage from virtually anywhere at any time, and they have more opportunity to share than in traditional, in-person focus groups—it’s not unusual for participants to spend an hour or more in an online discussion, as compared with only a few minutes in a focus group. Because researchers and participants can upload and comment on audio, video and static materials, online discussions often serve as the foundation for many types of qualitative projects.

Catapult™ is our fresh, multifaceted approach that is redefining category appraisals. This online bulletin board-driven solution uses a proven process to more intelligently define attributes using voice of the customer when evaluating brands in the context of their competition. Catapult can then identify what really matters to people, determine the optimal attribute combinations to maximize investment, and uncover white space that helps propel the brand forward.

Virtual Ethnographies are online discussions structured around specially-designed topics and activities that provide an authentic representation of consumers’ lives and how they interact with brands and products. They make extensive use of participant-generated video and images, such as documenting home tours, pantry excursions, garage walk-throughs and shopping missions.

Asynchronous Videos are a scheduled series of video assignments that encourage candid insights. During an online discussion, the moderator asks participants to upload a video recording of their thoughts on or behaviors regarding a specific topic. The result provides a visually robust source of insights.

Concept Reaction & Refinement discussions instill the voice of consumers and customers early in the development process. These online discussions elicit reactions to product or service concepts and gather suggestions for improvement. We can also modify the concepts based on feedback, and expose them again to respondents for a second critique.



Evoke™ is our proprietary, imagery-based approach to revealing emotion, a task that can be tough because we rarely recognize our subconscious emotions. Leveraging a large, diverse collection of images that are quantitatively linked to the specific emotions they trigger, Evoke extends our ability beyond gathering rational System 2 reactions, allowing us to explore more emotional, less considered System 1 responses. Perfect for use in online discussions, Evoke enables participants to be more forthcoming, introspective and insightful.

Mobile Ethnographies are mobile-based engagements in which participants share their emotions and actions in-the-moment rather than trying to recall them later. After downloading a mobile app, participants receive a text with short assignments and/or questions that can be answered by text, audio or video. Respondents also can send us on-the-go and in-context information videos, allowing us to see their daily emotions and actions.

Online Co-Creation are online discussions that tap into the envelope-pushing imaginations of Creatives—consumers who can generate lots of unique ideas for new products and services. Online co-creation sessions are oriented around creativity exercises rather than questions, with the goal of producing truly forward-looking ideas that can fill the innovation pipeline. We also hold co-creation sessions with employees, calling on our unique creativity activities to generate and vet ideas for new solutions.

Real-Time Approaches

These allow moderators and respondents to engage each other simultaneously:

Online Video Groups and Interviews bring the moderator and respondents together via videoconference to discuss and review stimuli and explore topics—all while using webcams to see and hear each other. The moderator can screen share and upload stimuli or share screens for comment and markup. Online video groups and interviews are fast and nimble and generate quick insights.

Telephone Interviews are a tried-and-true way to put the moderator in touch with a single individual or small group of respondents without having to meet face-to-face. The visual anonymity of phone interviews frees respondents to be candid, and the approach's low-tech requirements allow virtually anyone to participate.



We've got this!

Your team at Escalent understands your needs and is at-the-ready with proven alternatives to in-person research, meetings and workshops. We are honored to be your trusted partner, and we can navigate anything—together.

Talk to us.

P: 1 734.542.7600
E: INFO@ESCALENT.CO
ESCALENT.CO

About Escalent

Escalent is a top human behavior and analytics firm specializing in industries facing disruption and business transformation. As catalysts of progress for more than 40 years, we tell stories that transform data and insight into a profound understanding of what drives human beings. And we help businesses turn those drivers into actions that build brands, enhance customer experiences and inspire product innovation.

Visit escalent.co to see how we are helping shape the brands that are reshaping the world.