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How to Enhance the Value of Your Tracker Data

New Techniques and Resources to
Keep Your Tracker Earning its Keep

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Trackers represent a large investment in time and money so a periodic review to make sure the tracker is still delivering real value to stakeholders is an essential part of any tracker plan. While making changes to a tracker can lead to changes to the resulting data, those changes often result in more representative and insightful data. The choice between whether to evolve a tracker to keep pace with a changing consumer landscape or to keep the tracker stable can be complex, but those decisions should be intentional and carefully considered, beginning with an annual audit of the project's design. This review might result in making changes to the questionnaire, methodology or sample to ensure the tracker is staying current. (These changes are discussed in the Dynata Tracker eGuide).

In addition to making these common changes, there are three additional ways you can breathe new life and value into a tracker:

1. Incorporate new research techniques to better engage respondents, encouraging them to give you richer data

2. Review the screener section to ensure you are still reaching the desired population as consumer habits, your market, the economy and demographics change

3. Integrate additional data to enhance the survey results

1. Incorporating New Research Techniques

Changes in technology and methodology continue to benefit trackers. Questionnaire design, gamification techniques, audio and video now allow people to become active participants in the survey resulting in better engagement.

Co-creation and gamification elements make the participant an active part of the process and encourage fuller, richer data.

ACTIVE PARTICIPANT

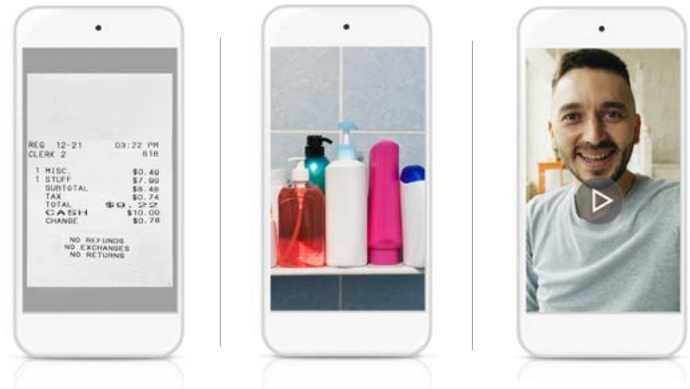**REACTIVE PARTICIPANT**

Which is your favorite color?

"How much did you pay?"
I think I paid...

"Tell us about your experience with our newest product." It was good.

We have the ability to replace recall questions with passively collected information for more accurate data on pricing and brand purchase information.

The combination of photos, audio and videos captures shelf views, receipts andin-the-moment, in-place video opinions.

Passively-collected ad exposure data, is matched with stored panelist data.

These and other new approaches can be leveraged in both existing trackers and new ones. The benefits include richer data as a basis for insights, and better visibility into the customer experience for the tracker's stakeholders, bringing marketers and other stakeholders closer than ever to their customers.

2. Revisiting the Tracker Screener

Spending time on designing the right screener for a tracker is crucial because a primary cause of poor quality survey data, especially for low-incidence topics, is that the wrong people are taking the survey.

This can also be a cause of tracker data losing its value because the people we were interviewing several years ago are no longer such a perfect match to our target.

When demographics change, the target population changes or when business titles and responsibilities change, it is time to revisit and re-evaluate the screener section of the tracker. Are we including and excluding the right people? Are the demographics broad enough to include everyone who should have a voice in our research question? Is the screener still efficiently delivering the correct audience?

This may be the time to also review some basic screener best practices:

1. Dynata recommends masking the topic of the study prior to qualification. This is especially important for studies with low-incidence rates because low-incidence studies terminate all but a few participants, while people who have given false answers or made a mistake in answering a screener question get into the survey.

2. Yes/No questions should not be used within a screener; we recommend multi-code choice questions instead. The answer choice lists for these should include both high and low incidence choices.

3. Open end questions can be an effective way of identifying the right participant.

3. Integrating Additional Data

You can have a big impact in improving a tracker's value without making any changes by integrating data from additional sources with your tracker survey data. The resulting enhanced data set can reveal significant new discoveries, without changing the survey instrument or compromising existing data.

Panel providers should own detailed, up-to-date profile data on your target audiences, as well as demographic and geographic information. This can include:

- Customer data (sales, CRM, etc.)
- Third-party data (Customer segmentation, financial, life stage, automotive, etc.)
- Advertising exposure data
- Brand preferences, purchase behavior
- Employment status and more

This type of data allows you to segment the tracker results to bring the perceptions of high-value consumers into sharper focus, and identify previously unrecognized commonalities that your brand can leverage.

Matching customer data from your own database against tracker data – with personally identifiable information stripped out to preserve privacy – can strengthen understanding of customers, and the brand's relationship with them. You can gain a more accurate grasp of how you are meeting customer needs by relating their perceptions to purchase and service histories and get a more detailed view of how loyalty programs contribute to customer growth and value.

Many trackers focus on brand awareness, perceptions, and purchase behaviors, topics which are inextricably linked to advertising. Tracker data can be used to inform creatives and improve ad targeting. Appending ad exposure data acquired through digital tracking, which allows you to know if someone was exposed to a campaign and the frequency of exposure, allows measurement that is not possible using only stated exposure questions.

Appending third-party datasets opens a broad palette of possibilities. Consider, for example, voter, purchase, automotive, travel, financial, and healthcare data. The discoveries can be invaluable – and unexpected.

Armed with this additional data, brand managers and marketers can understand changing preferences more specifically and in more detail, and can anticipate the near future with confidence. They can uncover previously unseen links between consumer behavior and identify traits or qualities that can now be identified – and targeted.

Case in Point

One researcher in **financial services** was puzzled by tracker results that didn't clearly reflect any segmentation data. Surprisingly, third-party voter and political affiliation data appended to their tracker results provided the missing link in explaining perceptions of brands and banking products, and even specific credit card preferences.

A **quick-service and fast casual restaurant** tracker which measures shifts in competitors and its own brand needed to understand the impact of a seasonal advertising campaign. By tagging its campaign and appending ad exposure data, they could accurately measure brand lift without adding survey questions, better target ads, and increase return on ad spend.

As these examples demonstrate, integrating additional data with your tracker results can deliver insights that are more powerful, relevant, actionable, and valuable to your organization – all without sacrificing tracker continuity.

By leveraging new research methodologies, the power of mobile to deliver audio and video, and the wealth of additional data available today, you can ensure your tracker continues to deliver valuable data and proves its value long-term by staying relevant in a rapidly evolving media, technology, and behavioral landscape.

About Dynata

Dynata is one of the world's leading single providers of first-party data contributed by people who opt-in to member-based panels that the company manages and maintains. With a reach that encompasses 60+ million people globally and an extensive library of individual profile attributes collected through surveys, Dynata is the cornerstone for precise, trustworthy quality data. The company has built innovative data services and solutions around this core asset to bring the voice of the individual to the entire marketing spectrum, from market research to marketing and advertising. Dynata serves nearly 6,000 market research agencies, media and advertising agencies, consulting & investment firms and healthcare and corporate customers in the North America, South America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific. For more information, go to dynata.com.

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