

**EBOOK | QUALITY MODULE**



# **A Holistic Approach to Data Quality**

The Total Research Quality Approach

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## Introduction

Discussions about online research quality are often narrowly focused, centering on how participants behave when taking a survey. Achieving quality data requires a holistic approach that allows both the researcher or marketer and provider to strongly impact the quality outcome.

In this eBook, we review the key drivers for online research quality and offer best practices and advice to drive high-quality results for your next research project.

# 1.

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## Reach the Right Audience

However good the questionnaire and fielding, if the right people are not being interviewed, the data won't be reliable.

### The Sample

High-quality sample has broad reach, consistency and representivity of the target market. Because not all samples are equal in this respect, it's essential to have a basic understanding of the sample you are using:

#### Find out the scale, breadth and diversity of the sourcing.

Multiple sources increase reach and diversity. To protect against bias and inconsistency, no single source should predominate. The sources must be complementary, attracting people from diverse geographic, demographic backgrounds, lifestyles, personalities, and motivations for taking part. When recruited members are proprietary, there is a relationship of trust which promotes better quality.

#### Know how the sources are blended and how consistency and representivity is maintained.

**Seek external validation.** Dynata conducts frequent research to ensure maximum representation when our sample blend is measured against relevant, locally appropriate benchmarks for ownership, lifestyle, and interests.

### Among Dynata's sample quality control drivers and techniques are:



Diverse recruitment partnerships with blue chip companies in retail, travel, entertainment, and business



Proprietary members who are known and trusted



Consistent source blending that is constantly monitored



Double-opt-in "member join process" measuring thought consistency, unlikely correlations, low-probability answers, speeding and more



Close panelist monitoring for behavioral anomalies (e.g. abrupt location changes or abnormal qualification rates)



Phone/SMS validation for reward redemption 3rd party data validation, network of checks for browser, system and BIOS configurations

## Target Your Audience

Dynata panels have millions of data points stored and are constantly updated so you can reliably target even niche audiences. We combine this with real-time screening to ensure only the people who meet your specific study criteria enter the survey. Having the right screener in place is vital to achieving quality data.

### Screener best practices

1. Avoid affirmation questions, which could encourage those with limited topic knowledge to think that they know enough about the subject matter to take part.
2. For B2B studies, remember that many people work for small businesses, so they may correctly state that they are responsible for finance, HR, building maintenance, marketing, sales and more. Consider the level of expertise you expect.
3. For B2B or low-incidence audiences, include knowledge test questions that ensure the participant is qualified not only on the role or condition, but has a good understanding of the topics to be covered.
4. Especially for low-incidence studies, ask the screener question again within the survey. One to two-percent of people may click on the wrong answer and screen-in to the survey by mistake, which could translate to a high percent of the overall sample in a low-incidence study.
5. Review screener questions for clarity of wording, scales and design, paying equal attention to avoiding exclusion of eligible participants.



# 2.

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## Ask the Right Questions

In addition to adhering to all the basic principles of questionnaire design:

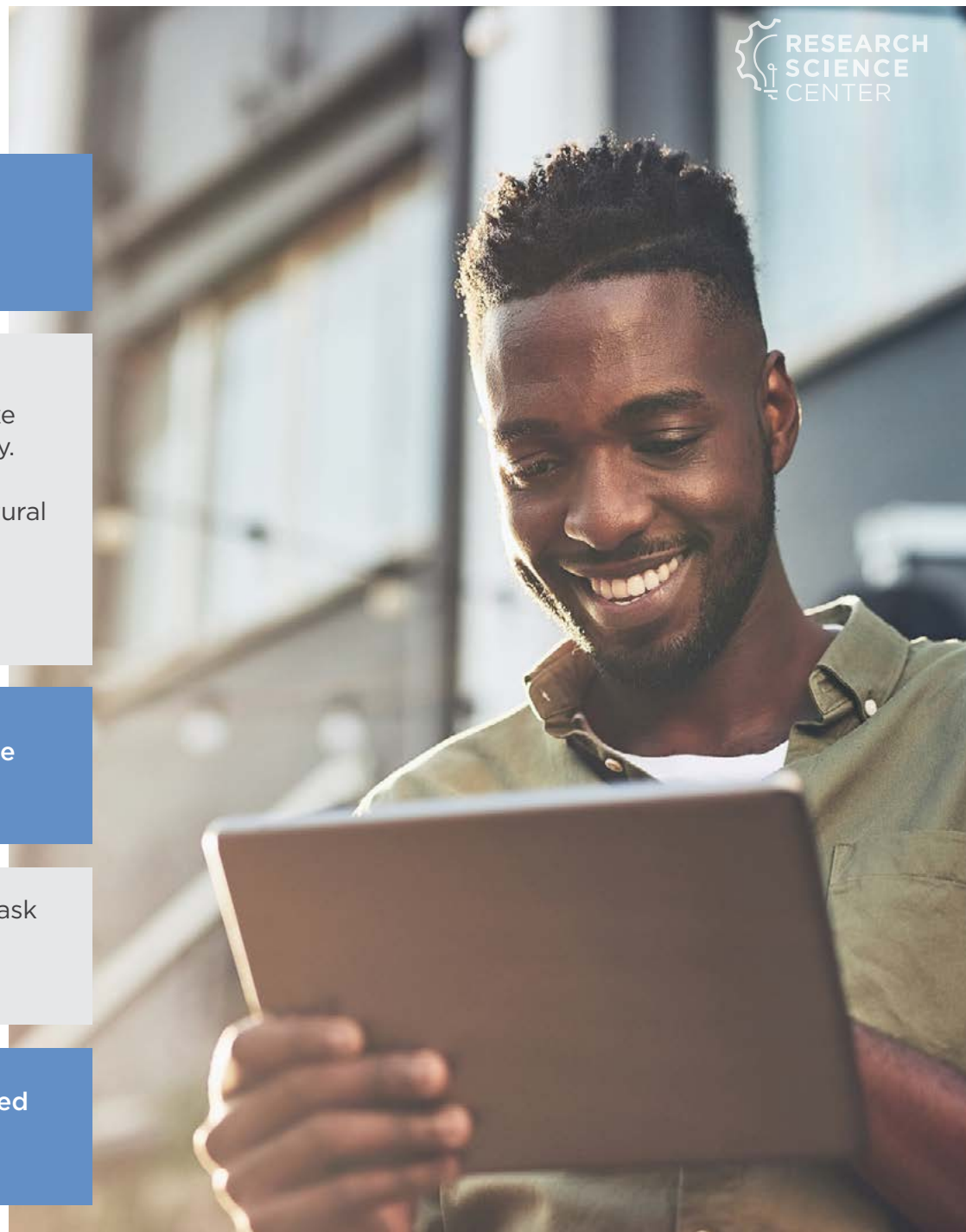
**Avoid “yes or no” questions** which appeal to a person’s instinct to be helpful and say “yes,” which results in over-claiming.

**For global studies, make sure your questionnaire is not just translated, but localized.** Basic information like education level and income definitions vary by country. For example, high numbers might equate positivity in some countries and negativity in others; there are cultural reasons for exaggeration in some regions. Shopping habits, brand names, and common terms may require more than basic translation.

**Stay neutral and avoid making assumptions about the person taking the survey.**

**Avoid long explanations.** Keep questions simple and ask only one thing at a time. Complex tests may be more successfully done via in-person groups.

**Test the survey on people who are not closely involved in the project, first, to get a “reality check.”**





# 3.

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**Provide the Right  
Experience**

The overall survey experience has a vital connection to the quality of results.

**Allow people to take the survey how and when they want.**

Make sure the survey is mobile-friendly. Up to 50% of people today choose to take surveys on a mobile device. Including those people is essential for feasibility and data reliability.

**Allow for adequate field time.** People have “different survey-taking routines.” Allow people to pause and return later, especially when the survey is long.



**Keep  
people  
motivated  
by:**

**Giving them choices.**

“Click to continue when you are ready”

**Acknowledging their effort.**

“That was a difficult set of questions, thank you for your answers.”

**Recognizing their value.**

“You are the expert, here.”

**Helping them feel a sense of belonging.**

“Hundreds of people from your state are also taking part in the survey.”



### Tips for designing surveys for mobile participants:

1. Start with the smallest screen and size up.
2. Design functional elements first, then add words around them.
3. Make text boxes as large as possible (you'll get longer responses!).
4. Test on multiple devices, horizontally and vertically.
5. Minimize the need to scroll.

### Limit survey length:

Research shows that after about 15 minutes, fatigue sets in and data quality deteriorates. People offer fewer words in open-ended questions, select fewer answers in lists, or may start to straight-line.

### Tips for shorter surveys



Consider removing questions if the data isn't changing or no action is being taken as a result of the answer



Split the sample and divide the questionnaire in two, linking the data sets via key questions



Make the questionnaire seem shorter via visual breaks, encouraging words and well-designed questions

# 4.

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## Review the Right Metrics



**Qualification rate is an excellent quality metric.** Qualification rates that are higher or lower than expected can indicate that a sample partner is not targeting as you would expect, or that there is an issue with the screener.

**Watch completion rates carefully,** especially at the introduction pages and for each question to ensure you aren't losing people to a programming or platform issue.

**Request device type data early-on** to understand who your partner is allowing into the survey, or who might be falling out due to device compatibility issues.

**Request the median Length of Interview (LOI)** at regular intervals during the survey. LOIs that move around can mean that participants are also changing.

**Ask for survey satisfaction scores or open ends, if available.**

## Summary- Choose the Right Partner

Dynata panels contain data from real people that is managed, curated and enhanced. We offer massive capacity for specialty audiences, such as healthcare, politics, and gaming and other hard-to-reach consumer and business targets such as financial analysts, truckers, virtual reality headset owners or potential European luxury car buyers. We offer the support of a Research Science Team of methodologists, local and vertical experts, and product teams who are designing new ways to make it easier for researchers and marketers to achieve the level of quality they seek.

If you would like more information about our range of quality, data-driven offerings, please visit [www.dynata.com](http://www.dynata.com)

### About the Author

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Tasha is the Panel Quality Lead, on the Research Science Team at Dynata. With over a decade of panel experience, she is dedicated to ensuring that clients get the high-quality sample data they expect from the Dynata panels. Prior to assuming her current role, she was a member of the operations team as Team Lead for the Media Channel.

### 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](http://dynata.com).

