

A common yet rarely answered question in marketing is: How do we understand and target niche audiences who account for very small segments of the overall population. Think physicians, patients of specific conditions, unacculturated Hispanics, bleisure travelers (who extend their business travel to include leisure purposes), small business decision makers for telecom services, and the list goes on and on.

These specialized groups of consumers or professionals are not easily reachable through broad demographics based advertising. High cost waste and high inaccuracy are the top concerns for marketers attempting to target these audiences.

Addressing the above question requires answering a preceding question about how we can encourage compliance from these population segments, especially in the context of tracking their behaviors on computer and mobile devices, which has become a high demand research methodology for yielding the type of much needed insights for digital marketing. This is the topic we focus on in this whitepaper.

First, let's face the challenges often seen with researching these niche audiences' behaviors through passive tracking of their devices. The leading factor is the limited available access to these audiences as a sample source. Given their sample sizes to begin with, it is understandable that we have to treat every respondent thoughtfully to maximize their cooperation. One lever to promote participation is to establish an attractive incentive. The high incentive coupled with the much higher requirement for time and resources involved in contacting and engaging these respondents lead to significant costs for conducting research among these groups. In addition, these audiences tend to be more cautious in sharing their opinions and data.



While the solutions vary depending on the exact audience, there are a number of overarching best practices that are essential in order to do the job right.

We start with a streamlined on-boarding process that takes a respondent through a brief survey process, serving as a screening step, with the final point being the pathway to download the tracking app from an app store (i.e., Apple AppStore or Google PlayStore). This process does not require a respondent to jump through different touch points in order to determine qualification for a study, technical feasibility and understand the requirements of the research. Occasionally, a client may wish to register their own respondents on their side before passing the respondents onto the installation step for the tracking app. This on-boarding process can be altered to accommodate the client's comfort level with respondent disclosure.

Additionally, we advocate for presenting the respondents with a clear summary of required tasks and/or responsibilities as part of their participation in the research. This summary is best done in the screening survey with key elements of responsibilities called out to be tied with incentives. For example, if submitting selfie videos is a must have task together with being passively tracked on computer and smartphone, it needs to be specified as a standalone requirement and ideally accompanied by an additional incentive. A simple step in itself, the summary fulfills a critical purpose of keeping all the “to-dos” in one single place, which allows both the respondent and us as the research company to refer to as the gauge for participation completeness.

Another paramount component to maximize respondent cooperation is telephone support for both technical and research related questions. Telephone support adds the human touch that enhances trust and breaks down any perception of complexity. Telephone support is implemented in two ways. Respondents are provided with telephone numbers to call the research support team in extended hours. The research team is also proactive in identifying respondents who may encounter confusion and tech questions, and subsequently works with the support team to call on individuals to offer assistance.

These overall key practices are applicable and proven effective for the niche audiences in particular. Furthermore, there are nuances and varying degrees of importance associated with each practice in actual implementation. We’ve detailed the leading solutions for a number of audience types below.

Audience #1: Physicians

Solution Priorities:

- Human touch — phone calls and support for tech installation and questions
- Immediacy in support
- Pre-identifying device models that have optimal compatibility for tracking (e.g., exclude Windows, etc)
- Pro-active communication on any known technical challenges
- Anticipate hospital compliance related policies on computer and Internet access to avoid conflict
- Assurance on data protection
- Including donation to charity as a form of incentive



Audience #2: Patients

Solution Priorities:

- Human touch — phone calls and support for tech installation and questions
- Thoughtful communication and language to ease concerns and convey empathy
- Assurance on data protection
- Generous over-recruitment

Audience #3: Small Business Owners/Decision Makers

Solution Priorities:

- Immediacy in support is important
- Thoughtful communication and language — make it relevant to them, make it clear
- Pro-active communication on any known technical challenges
- Significant incentive
- Inclusion of sharing research findings as a form of incentive



Audience #4: Kids & Teens

Solution Priorities:

- Parental permission is a must for under 13 years
- Thoughtful communication and language — make it fun to them. Using emojis is a good practice
- Assurance on data protection



Gaining permission and cooperation from these unique population segments for behavior tracking is not far from market researchers' reach. As behavior tracking is being adopted as a mainstream research methodology, it is a tremendous missed opportunity if we shy away from exploring what can be done to make respondent participation a non-issue.

With the above practices in mind, we also offer two additional perspectives that help brands and research companies attain a pragmatic expectation for engaging niche audiences for behavioral measurement. One important topic is data privacy and protection. As a data and research company, we take it very seriously to communicate and address any questions about data permission. All clients we service are also recommended to do so. Explicit and open communication on the purpose of data collection is always the best pre-cursor to any data privacy compliance. The other consideration is for potential technical challenges or user experience challenges that a project may entail in the process of recruitment. While the behavior tracking app is designed to be quick and easy, we shall keep in mind that users from these specialized segments may vary in the level of comfort of using technologies in general. Anticipating such predispositions and planning for them is critical. If time is of essence and there is a very limited available sample, it is necessary to implement one on one technical support to walk through downloading and installation to eliminate any less optimal user experience.

Having the respondent install a piece of software for tracking as part of a research study is fundamentally similar to many other types of traditional research we have been doing whenever we need respondents to participate with a bit more involvement. Our ability to provide clear instructions, communicate with the target audience's preferences and needs in mind, and make



available support as much as possible will break down any barriers in accessing these niche audiences and their behavioral insights.

About Luth Research

Luth Research has been a market research leader since 1977 and continues to make groundbreaking advancements in next generation customer intelligence. Powered by ZQ Intelligence™ which passively captures the digital journeys of consumers across all devices, Luth creates the innovative technology and research methods required for businesses to thrive. From survey research to passively tracking digital behavior, Luth Research blends research expertise with proprietary data collection resources to offer unmatched customer insights.