



Tasty product testing

Whilst it's not the most obvious application of online research, web-based in-Home Usage Tests (iHUTs) are a great way of testing anything from electrical goods to cosmetics, clothing, food or drink.

As part of the mmr group we've grown up on a diet of product testing, so our clients not only benefit from Qubiq's online research expertise, but also real know-how when it comes to understanding how best to test and improve products.

How does it work?

As with all our research we make the product testing process as hassle-free as possible, both for clients and respondents.

We start by talking to our clients to ensure we understand as much as we can about the project, its aims, background and how the information will be used. This helps us design research that fits with both your business needs and budget, and ensures we're in the best position possible to assess performance of your product in a competitive context, and to provide detailed optimisation guidance at the end of the process.

From that point on we'll do all the hard work, pulling together the research plan,

questionnaire and sample spec. whilst you send the products to our logistics department who handle the postage, packaging and despatch.

We recruit target respondents from an online panel and send them the products together with detailed instructions on how to test them. We then send a link to the online survey to record their thoughts on the products. Simple – no interviewers going back and forth, and no hassle.

In our experience respondents follow the test protocol carefully and response rates have been really encouraging, showing the process is popular with those who take part.



What can (and can't) you test online?

There are obviously limitations on what can be tested via an in-home online approach.

Basically anything that can be safely and cost effectively posted to respondents is fine; so non-perishable foods, clothing, small electrical goods, computer games, cosmetics etc are all in scope. But fragile, perishable or very heavy objects are not so suited.

We'll honestly advise you whether online is the right way to go for a specific project – if not we'll point you in the direction of our face-to-face team!



What are the benefits of online in-home testing?

- **One of the main advantages is cost.** In the right situation it can be considerably cheaper than a face-to-face approach – particularly with large sample sizes, or where you're looking to find users of low incidence products.
- **Speed;** No data cleaning and no chasing interviewers!
- **No interviewer bias;** really important for product tests!

- **Excellent for multiple product tests.** People test one product per day, without the need for expensive repeat visits from interviewers. They record their thoughts each day on paper, then go online to fill in the final survey.
- **Interactive data collection** allows the use of techniques not normally associated with home usage tests – we use our full suite of tools to make the interview more powerful and more involving.
- **Ideal for food and drink** products where preparation is a key part of the product experience. Respondents get to use these in a natural environment, meaning the preparation process forms an important part of the evaluation.
- **True geographic representation;** we're not confined by where interviewers are available.

Advanced analysis techniques

For multi-product tests we typically include segmentation analysis to help us understand the profile of product likers, and to establish whether products have genuine niche potential – something easily missed when looking at total sample data.

We have a number of techniques specifically designed for product improvement and cost saving initiatives. For example, for food and drink products our unique PPA optimisation approach ensures we only recommend formulation changes that will actually improve the overall product (rather than robbing Peter to pay Paul).

Going one stage further, we can crack open our unique product development tools including **tailor2taste** (a technique that links quantitative consumer data with sensory profiles to pin-point the optimum taste profile for a product) and **TOTALsense** (maximising the fit between the emotional and functional equities of a brand and the physical experience delivered by the product). Powerful stuff.

To chat about your next product test, call **01491 822555**. Find out more at www.qubiq-online.com

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