Surveys

Online surveys are a powerful tool for learning people's views and helping organisations take decisions that are supported by members and/or the public.

1. Set up a survey page

The survey page is special in that it does not use widgets, though you can include widgets (e.g. pictures, explanatory text, etc.) in an information column on the right-hand side of the page.

This shows a typical survey page with an introduction describing the purpose of the survey, the launch button (which is added automatically) and a conclusion

2. Setting up

Surveys need careful planning. Questions should be neutral and not lead the respondent towards a particular response.

They should also be interesting otherwise respondents might answer one or two questions and then lose interest.

Finally they should be as short as possible – both in the number of questions and the complexity of each question.

Here is the above survey page in edit mode: just one question has so far been inserted.

3. Questions

There are 13 different question types and a good survey mixes these around a little, so not all questions look alike. Starred question types include a list of up to 20 items.

- A single line of text – e.g. where do you live?
- A number – e.g. how old are you?
- Comment – e.g. please explain how you feel about …
- Yes or no – e.g. do you own a car?
- *Drop-down list – e.g. Please select a colour from the following list
- *Radio buttons – e.g. Which of the supermarkets is the best
- Attitude – e.g. How do you respond to the following statement (choose agree, disagree, etc.)
- *Check boxes – e.g. Which of the following vegetables did you grow this year? (tick all that apply)
- Ranking – e.g. How satisfied are you with your broadband speed (choose high, low, etc.)
- *Rating list – e.g. Please rate the following on the scale 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent)
- *Text list – e.g. Please type your favourite meal on each of the following occasions
- *Number list – e.g. Please enter an age against each of these celebrities
- No question – useful as an introduction to a group of questions

The most useful question types are those that can be analysed, i.e. they force the respondent to choose from options rather than simply type in an answer.

Here is an example of a check boxes question using a list:

Digital technologies

Which of the following technologies do you use?

Do not include technologies you only use at work

Mobile phone with apps (e.g. Apple, Android) ☐
Laptop computer ☐
Desktop computer ☐
Tablet (e.g. ipad) ☐
Streaming TV (e.g. Netflix, BBC iPlayer) ☐
Streaming audio (e.g. Spotify, Apple Music) ☐
Smart speaker (e.g. Amazon Alexa) ☐
Satellite navigation (e.g. TomTom) ☐
Other (list below) ☐

Please list any other digital technologies you use and, if you wish, expand on your answers.:

[< Back]   [Next >]

Any question can optionally include a comment box, as in the example above.

4. Managing and analysing responses

You can keep an eye on responses from the "responses" link on the survey page. Edit lets you edit any responses that need changing (e.g. to remove offensive comments). Status lets you include or exclude individual responses.

Survey responses

Here are the respondents to your survey in order of starting date and time. "Excluded" indicates the response is excluded from analysis.

"edit" allows you to review and change a response whilst "delete" removes an entire response. The respondent ID number is listed in the analysis of text or comment fields.

ID	Ref Date	Time		
7941	06 September 2019	11:59:47	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]
7942	06 September 2019	12:03:13	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]
7943	06 September 2019	12:04:54	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]
7944	06 September 2019	12:58:15	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]
7945	06 September 2019	14:08:36	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]
7946	06 September 2019	14:09:45	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]
7947	06 September 2019	14:10:21	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]
7948	06 September 2019	14:31:50	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]
7949	06 September 2019	14:39:05	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]
7950	06 September 2019	14:45:03	Included	[**edit** | **delete** | **status**]

Close

Which of the following technologies do you use?

10 responses:

Mobile phone with apps (e.g. Apple, Android)	9	90%
Laptop computer	3	30%
Desktop computer	3	30%
Tablet (e.g. ipad)	2	20%
Streaming TV (e.g. Netflix, BBC iPlayer)	6	60%
Streaming audio (e.g. Spotify, Apple Music)	5	50%
Smart speaker (e.g. Amazon Alexa)	4	40%
Satellite navigation (e.g. TomTom)	6	60%
Other (list below)	2	20%

The "analyse" link in the survey page allows you to view the results of the survey graphically, as well as list the freeform comments.

Finally the "export" link allows the raw results of the survey to be exported to Excel for further analysis. The export is unprocessed and work will be needed in Excel to make use of the data.

5. Conclusion

The survey page is a powerful tool to engage with and gain the views of community group members and the general public. Surveys need to be designed carefully and should be tested on a small group of users before being launched to the target group.

The different question types can make a survey engaging to users, helping to ensure they put time into responding accurately and complete all questions.

Finally, the results of a well-designed and executed survey can prove invaluable in supporting fundraising applications as well as guiding strategy.

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