



QUEST
MINDSHARE

Creating a Better B2B Survey:

Business Professionals
Speak Out - U.S. vs. U.K.



What's the Problem Quest saw with B2B Surveys?

- **Response rates** for online research are **declining**.
- Bad enough in consumer research, but **worse in B2B!!**
- We wondered, “**what makes this better?**”
- We found **no original research** on this.
- So we **built our own survey** to ask B2B respondents directly.





What were we trying to find out?

Yeah, what's working well, but especially looking for:

- What **de-motivates** B2B survey-takers?
- Where are **pain points** during B2B surveys?
- What **incentives** do they want?

- And, what just **pisses them off**?



Finally - how do they want us, the professional researchers, to “fix” B2B surveys?





What did Quest do?

Fielded research with **n800 total**, 400 in each of the U.S. and in the U.K. :

- **Small business owners** and GMs (<50 employees)
- **Mid-level managers** and directors
- **Higher-level management** – AVP, VP, SVP
- **Tech specialists** – ITDMs, IT influencers
- Non-tech, non-mgmt. “**regular workers**”

**Required: Taken 2+ B2B surveys past 12 months*





What did Quest do? (cont'd)

Built a questionnaire focusing on all aspects of a typical B2B survey-taking process :

- Why would they share their “**professional opinion**” in the first place?
- **Invitations** – what did they respond to vs. ignore
- **Screening and qualifying** – what they’re okay with vs. object to
- **Survey experience** – good and bad, how they would change
- **Incentives** – what they’ve experienced, what they prefer
- “**Open forum**” questions throughout – “why” to follow “what”





What did Quest find?

Overall we found that **B2B respondents** showed **great similarity in the U.S. and U.K.**

- with **a few notable differences**, as we'll see
- these were centered in **motivations and incentives**
- most of the survey experience answers were aligned closely
- mainly, "**B2B is B2B**", and at least U.S. and U.K. were highly similar





“What are the top motivators to take a B2B survey?”

- Making my opinion known-heard- a strong #1!
- Compensation – this differed by country (as we’ll see) – 2nd place for both geos
- After these, the geos had different priorities:
 - U.S. – exposure to new ideas, tech; industry trends
 - U.K. – seeing an interesting topic to comment on, non-cash incentives
- Several significant differences between the countries!





“What “pain points” have you had in business surveys?”

- **Screening/qualifying questions! (!!!)**
 - This was **HUGE**. We mean really, *really* important.
 - Compared to anything else in taking B2B surveys, **this was 3X**
 - **Exactly as bad in the U.K. as in the U.S.!**

*Why is our screening/qualifying **so bad?***





“What “pain points” have you had in business surveys?”

A follow-on asked “What kind of screening questions are **most/least appropriate?**”

- Most –
 - My industry, decisions I make/influence
 - My responsibilities/title
- Least –
 - My age/gender/ethnicity/race (not relevant)
 - Personally identifiable business information – me, my company



“What would make screening/qualification better?”

- **Pre-qualify** – lots of comments about “*use profiled information, targeting better to ask less screening*”
- **Relevancy** – “so many questions *have nothing to do with me or the survey topic*”
- **Efficiency** – “too often *screening is a survey in itself*”;
“Ask key questions early – *no more than 2-3 minutes in.*”





Our advice for **four screening topics** to focus on:

1. “**Ask me what I do all day**, how I spend my work time.”
2. “**Ask me what I influence or decide.**”
3. “**Tell me** what you want to talk about.”
4. “**Ask me relevant questions about** what I know or decide for your topic.”

“**Get this done quickly** – don’t waste my time.”

More to come on this – a very hot button we didn’t expect.



“What kind of questions during a survey bother you?”

Two standouts:

1. **Big forced grids** – “why so much detail?”
2. Confidential personal or company info – “**work PII**”

Almost as strong:

- “**Ignorant questions**” (i.e. writer doesn’t know the industry)
- **Open ends** - consistently disliked

1. Which types of academic texts do you prefer?

Textbooks Journal Articles Individual Book Chapters (non-fiction) Essays News Articles
Editorials Novels Plays Poems Web Sites Other: _____

2. Which formats do you prefer?

Print Screen Audio

		Always	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Let's Discuss
Previewing	3. Do you preview the full text before starting?						
	4. Do you supplement with unassigned materials as needed?						
	5. Do you seek guiding questions or themes before starting?						
	6. Do you estimate how much time you will need to read?						
Taking Notes	7. Do you take notes while you read?						
	8. Do you mark your text or write in the margins?						
	9. Do you use a highlighter heavily?						
	10. Do you summarize as you read?						
Time Management	11. Do you set aside specific times in your schedule to read?						
	12. Do you read at times when you're most alert and rested?						





“What kind of questions during a survey bother you?”

- **Grids, grids, grids** – *“Remove the need to populate all of a grid when 90 per cent is irrelevant”; “...just having surveys without silly large grids or awkward open-ended questions will encourage me to do more.”*
- **Poor surveys design/function** – *“Better design of the survey”; “Show me you know something about my industry.” “**No breakage.**”*
- **Open ends requiring “lots of writing”** – *“We spend a lot of time writing at work and would appreciate less of this in surveys.”*



“How long is too long for a business survey?”



Cooperation peaks at **15 minutes**.

Respondents said they're **twice as likely to quit at 20 minutes. Stronger in the U.K. than the U.S. – both above 75%**

Quest will be exploring this ago-old question further:

- When do people *actually* drop out?
- How does B2B survey data degrade prior to that point?





On to Incentives...

Originally Quest was going to focus solely on incentives but broadened our research at clients' request.

We were *really* curious **what B2B survey respondents wanted, expected, need to participate.**

- The literature on this was dismal – nothing concrete.





“What incentives have you ever been offered for a B2B survey?”

Cash is king! £ !!

All of our respondents have been offered cash or cash equivalents (gift card/code).

But **other choices** (from a looong list) are **hardly ever offered**.

- U.S. respondents haven't been offered non-cash alternatives.
- In U.K., more common for “information alternatives”.





Now some good stuff on incentives...

“What **cash incentive** have you typically **been offered** for taking a B2B survey?”

- Less than £8 for surveys under 20 minutes

“What **cash incentive** do you **expect to be paid** for a typical B2B survey?”

- Differed by position/level, size of company, but **much more – 2-3x** what they're getting now for under 20 minutes.





“If you were to build the perfect incentive...?”

- **“Money, and”**
- “Money or knowledge to further my career”
- “Cash, with charitable donations.”
- “HIGHER INCENTIVES AND FUTURE FOCUSED INDUSTRY INFORMATION RELEVANT TO MY ROLE”
- “Free gifts and access to company videos, membership to professional bodies.”

Much more commentary about additional/alternative rewards in U.K.





Now some good stuff on incentives...(cont'd)

We saw in the **U.K.** data a **much stronger desire for charitable giving**:

“I give where I can, but doing some surveys that might influence something, and might help someone in need, or protect the environment and the world, I'm in.”

Not a priority in the U.S. – donations ranked quite low for motivation.

Quest is planning a conjoint to explore this in depth.





“What specific info would you share (assuming a good incentive)?”

Quest’s lead Project Management people asked!

Types of info they’re **okay being asked**:

- **Customer makeup** – wholesale/retail, domestic/intl., etc.
- **Purchase stage** – investigating/considering purchase/purchased
- Interestingly – **budgets/spending** for categories





“What specific info would you not share (regardless of incentive)?”

Types of info they're **strongly not** okay being asked: “**work PII**”:

- My personal work info – email, LinkedIn profile, phone number
- Company identifying information – name, address, employee size, revenue (other than general screening-type questions), specific spending

These were **deal-breakers**!!





“One change to most motivate me to take more B2B surveys”

“Shorten the screening process”

“No long grid questions – hate those”

“Respect my time”

“Shorter surveys and higher incentives”

“Ask about my experience for the topic”

“Faster screening process”

“Stop asking my age and gender – why?”

“Remove the personal questions”





Quest's Recommendations – Three Key Takeaways

1. Be very careful with your screening questions

- Sore spot for B2B respondents
- Make your screening questions:
 - **Fewer** – you have three minutes, maybe
 - **More relevant** – to the person's role
 - **Direct** – “ask me what I know about, influence, decide”





Quest's Recommendations – Three Key Takeaways

2. Alternatives to “just cash” need exploration

- Higher payouts would attract more fraud attempts, of course.
- As mentioned, **Quest will dive into this further** in 2024-2025

3. Asking “Work PII” will kill your responses

- B2B respondents will share certain types of “sensitive” info
- They **don't want** questions linked to their personal or specific company identity





Where's Quest going next with this topic?

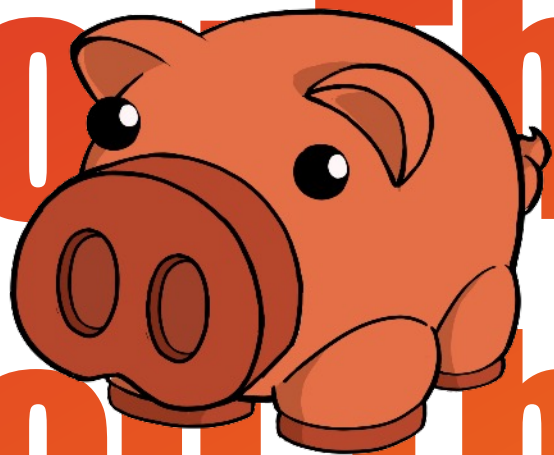
We uncovered a lot more to do. Further research we mentioned:



1. Conjoint on incentives
2. Data degradation – what happens when, and how badly, for long B2B LOI?
3. Options for how we screen – innovative ideas/processes for screening we want to test



**Thank You Thank You
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