



**QUEST
MINDSHARE**

Creating a Better B2B Survey:

**Business Professionals
Speak Out**



What's the Problem Quest saw with B2B Surveys?

- Response rates for online research are **declining**.
- Finding willing audiences is **harder!**
- Bad enough in consumer research, but **worse in B2B!!**

In B2B research:

- **Smaller** populations available
- More **competition** for attention
- **Time-constrained** respondents





“What will better motivate B2B survey-takers?”

Quest looked for answers from previous research.

- What will **increase participation and engagement**?
- **TONS** of articles, blogs talking about “better” B2B surveys
- **NONE** showed direct research with B2B respondents

So we built our own research project to find out!





What did Quest do?

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, from where, 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 do? (cont'd)

Fielded with n80 each/**400 total** of :

- 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”

**Quotas for company size – small, mid-level, enterprise*

**No quotas for LOB, geo*

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





What were we trying to find out?

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

- What **de-motivates** B2B survey-takers?
- What do they want **less** of?
- Where are **pain points** during B2B surveys?
- What incentives do they want?
- And what just **pisses them off**?

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





Let's get to the results...

But first, let's see who can steal our thunder:

- Where in the process of taking a B2B survey did respondents say was the **biggest PITA**?
- What kind of questions during a survey **pissed people off most**?
- What type of information do B2B respondents **hate to share**?





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

- **Making my opinion known-heard** – stronger among smaller company and lower-level people
- A close #2- **Compensation** (cash or equivalent)
- Also, close – exposure to new ideas, tech; gaining info helpful to my role

The losers? **Non-cash incentives, competitive info** to help my company





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

- Screening/qualifying questions – a very strong #1, 3X others

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

- Most – industry, decisions I make/influence, my responsibilities/title
- Least – my age/gender/ethnicity/race (not relevant)





“What would make screening/qualification better?”

- **Sooner!** (90% of sample)
 - Tell me sooner if I don't qualify
 - Pre-qualify me, use profiled info.
- **Better!** (70% of respondents)
 - Ask more relevant questions
 - Ask me about my role/knowledge





“How long before you’re disqualified is reasonable?”

- Three minutes, tops!
 - Less than 10% said four minutes or more
 - Only 15% said “depends on the survey”
- Anyone from **Sago** in the audience?
 - Look up Isaac Rogers’ recent blog
 - He quotes **12 minutes max** for screening





My net for screening, time, types of questions asked...

“Tell me what you want to talk about.”

“Ask me what I do/know related to that.”

“Let’s get started or get done!”

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





Other “major pain points during a business survey”?

A solid second place – “confusing/bad survey design”

Right there with this – long LOI (more on that in a sec)

Interestingly, “Survey invitations” not an issue

- 85% said “no problems”





“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





“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**.

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.

Discounts, subscriptions, survey summary content, access to restricted media, etc. – **our respondents haven't been offered cash alternatives.**





Now some good stuff on incentives...

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

- Less than \$10 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.





“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. Don't expect to keep their attention more than 15 minutes

- As mentioned, Quest will dive into this further in 2024

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?

Deeper dives into the current data

- Only overall highlights today – webinar coming!

More on hot spots soon!– issues around LOI, work PII and screening/qualification

More on improvements – today focused on problems areas. We want to deliver more on solutions.





Shout-outs

David Bruce & Tyler Tetz at **TL;DR Insights**

For specific thoughts and suggestions

Terry Sweeney at **RONIN**

He should get co-credit for all his ideas contributed!

Cathy Harrison, Independent Researcher

My survey would have been lesser without her assistance. Hire her to help you too!

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Tables and tabs extraordinaire – his work made my data review tons easier.

**Thank You Thank You
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Scott Worthge

Research Director

Quest Mindshare

sworthge@questmindshare.com

+1 650 867 5976

