

RMS News

A Marketing Newsletter

Spring 2005

Volume 2, Issue 1

A publication of Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc.

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RMS Launches New Website

Research & Marketing Strategies (RMS) is pleased to announce the launch of its new website. Introduced in March, the website offers an in-depth look at RMS' capabilities and services. The website profiles the company's history, specialized market research services, employees, and various research methods used by the firm to meet the information needs of clients.



Highlighting one of the many capabilities of RMS, the website includes an electronic survey that visitors can take. As you will read later in this newsletter, electronic surveys represent a research technique that is becoming more popular as our society has an increasing interest in using the Internet for both professional and personal needs.

We hope you will enjoy the website and find the electronic survey insightful and helpful!

Case Study: Anoplate

2004 represented the third consecutive year that RMS conducted a customer satisfaction survey for Anoplate, an ISO-registered metal plating company. For the first time this year, Anoplate's surveys was made available to Anoplate customers for online completion. This option was well received, with nearly one-third of the respondents completing the survey online.

Customer satisfaction surveys are an excellent way to obtain client feedback. Anoplate's President and Chief Operating Officer, Jim Stevenson, stated: "We found the survey results most helpful in validating comments heard from the field via customer audits, sales representatives and customer service employees. Further, the study provided in-depth customer reactions to specific production processes so that we could make improvements."

ANOPLATE Anoplate is using the survey results in their 2005 Corporate Plan. Three strategic areas were identified from the survey results that will allow Anoplate to establish effective, well-planned goals for 2005. This is a clear example of how market research can enable companies to maintain a strategic, competitive advantage and facilitate intelligent changes where appropriate.

Companies that track customer satisfaction are able to build loyalty and begin to fully understand how they are perceived by their customers. Companies often learn how they compare to competitors and operational processes can be improved to further build market share. When conducted by a third party like RMS, survey respondents are more likely to share honest opinions, allowing the company to derive reliable results and make informed choices going forward.

FUN FACT: The New York Yankees were originally called the Highlanders.

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What Do You Think?

E-mail your comments, ideas or suggestions for the newsletter to:
JenniferC@RMSresults.com

Thank You !

A special thank you to all who offered important feedback about our previous newsletter issues. We have reviewed your comments and incorporated many of them into this version.



Client Comments

“Continuing progress updates were helpful . . . the better RMS becomes, the better provider of service they are for Anoplate.”

— Anoplate

“RMS staff was responsive and provided complete information. We were very pleased with the results .”

— GHI
(Group Health Incorporated)

“The opportunity to provide input . . . and contribute to the customization of the survey was significant”

— North County Savings Bank

Research Toolbox

Electronic Surveys



Telephone surveys have been the most dominant modality of market research for many years. However, technological advances in communication tools have made electronic surveys among the latest, most innovative methods of data collection. Electronic surveys come in different forms, including e-mail and Web-based surveys, and offer many benefits to companies. They are lower cost, virtually paperless, quick, and easy. However, there is a flip side to every coin. Some feel that even though electronic surveys are cost-effective, they are appropriate only for certain clients, and



may be limited to those populations who have access to or use the Internet on a regular basis. While market research is extremely important and even imperative to the success of a company, it is equally beneficial to analyze both sides of the survey issue before deciding on the best research tool for your business. Below is a list of the major pros and cons associated with electronic surveys.

Pros:

- **Lower cost** — sending surveys online is much cheaper than mailing or faxing surveys, saving on printing, postage, and eliminating the cost associated with data entry.
- **Faster transmission** — electronic surveys can be sent instantly to the participant rather than taking three or more days for regular mail delivery.
- **Higher response rate** — research shows that an electronic survey takes less time to answer than a written or telephone survey, making response rates generally higher.
- **Quicker response time** — again, because of the “real-time” nature of the Internet, participants can answer a survey and send it back instantly (no more surveys sitting on a desk waiting to be placed in the mail).
- **Wider coverage** — since the Internet is global there are no geographic boundaries limiting participation. Companies have the ability to choose exactly where they want data to originate from.
- **More candid responses** — a third party research firm is able to offer their website as the host site for the survey. Since the participants are answering the survey on a private website, they are more apt to be honest.

Cons:

- **Sample limitations** — a targeted population may not have regular access to the Internet.
- **Additional instructions** — participants may require additional directions or orientation to the idea of online surveys.
- **Potential technical problems** — there is the *potential* for “electronic” glitches that would affect a survey. However, when electronic surveys are set up and administered by a research firm, special precautions are taken to ensure that problems do not arise.

RMS has the capacity to conduct electronic surveys. Our clients who have utilized this method of survey research have been very satisfied. RMS would encourage its use for companies who are looking to conduct primary market research because of its cost effectiveness and efficiency. In addition, SNAP™, the survey software which RMS uses for survey design and data analysis purposes, was awarded ISO-9001 certification earlier this year. This certification is an internationally recognized standard for quality. The certification confirms that the company’s systems and processes, including customer satisfaction monitoring, meet the highest standards. RMS is proud to be using software with such accreditation.



Special Article

Why Market Research Makes Sense

Many firms today are grappling with two strategic decisions:

- 1) Whether to conduct market research; and
- 2) When conducting market research, whether to outsource to a third party or train "in-house" staff for the project.

In order to be successful, firms must know their competitors, how to make their customers *completely satisfied*, and how to manage change effectively — all while being cognizant of the company's objectives and corporate direction. ***More often than not, it makes the most sense to outsource market research activities.***



Budgeting for market research is crucial, because many firms do not have the resources or the time to conduct research internally. Moreover, outsourcing market research enables a firm to benefit from professionals who thoroughly know the market research field and can customize research according to specific objectives and guidelines. Famous economist Philip Kotler once said: "companies tend to spend half of one percent on research and 99.5% on promotion, when they would be better off spending 1.5 to 2% on research".

Market research firms have a significant, comparative advantage, with access to diverse talent, a wide range of information, and specialized software and facilities. Equally important, they are able to remain objective, which can be difficult to do with an in-house research team that has personal and/or emotional interest. An outside firm can make valuable, objective recommendations based on the research results.

Deciding whether or not to conduct market research is relatively simple: it is important to have a clear and firm grasp on your company's direction and core competencies, as well as satisfaction levels of customers. Part of a marketing budget should always include room for research, as an instrument of both growth and knowledge. Market research firms offer sophisticated expertise and can deliver valuable results that may allow more cost-effective processes to be introduced within the company.

What a firm *doesn't* know *can* hurt it. It is easy to make wrong assumptions without conclusive data from market research. Those assumptions could have devastating effects.



Mark Dengler
President

President's Corner

As we progress through the new year, I would like to take this opportunity to talk about the business cycle and the importance of including market research in your business process. The first half of the year is the best time to conduct a market research project because its valuable results can then be incorporated into budget and planning sessions during the fall. By identifying research opportunities, your company will be able to: increase your knowledge of various consumer, product and competitive markets; plan ahead for changes that may take place throughout the year; solidify and increase your customer base; and grow your market share. Here at RMS, we are constantly enhancing our research services in order to

tailor them to our clients' needs. Including market research in your company's budget is a smart move that differentiates you from your competitors and should be a part of your corporate equation for positive change and advancements. You will find that market research gives your company confidence, direction, answers to many questions, and aids in efficient growth in the long term.

RMS Professional Services Include:

- ✓ **Custom Survey Research**
 - Telephone Surveys
 - Written Surveys
 - Focus Groups
 - Personal Interviews
 - Electronic Surveys
 - Mystery Shopping
- ✓ **Site Selection Research**
- ✓ **Strategic Planning**
- ✓ **Customer Satisfaction Measurement**
- ✓ **Competitive Positioning & Intelligence Gathering**
- ✓ **New Product/Service Feasibility Studies**
- ✓ **Customer Profiling**
- ✓ **Geographic Analysis of Business Patterns**
- ✓ **Demographic and Psychographic Analysis**

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Customer SatisFACTion Survey System Launched

RMS is now offering a customized service to companies who rely on their customers for word-of-mouth referrals and repeat business. The **Customer SatisFACTion Survey System** is a tool created by RMS to help you obtain feedback from your customers shortly after a service has been completed. Through a customized telephone survey, the **Customer SatisFACTion Survey System** will help you retain and gain *completely satisfied customers* in the following ways:

Customer SatisFACTion Surveys are a way of expressing appreciation for your customer's business.



Surveying customers increases the rate of satisfaction and customer retention.



A completely satisfied customer will contribute to increased business by word-of-mouth and positive referral testimonials.

For more information on this product, contact RMS at 315-635-9802 or at info@RMSresults.com.



Employee Spotlight Patricia Forken Senior Research Associate



As a Senior Research Associate, Pat brings nearly twenty years of experience in marketing, strategic planning, communications, advertising and sales to her role at RMS. Prior to joining RMS, Pat was a Marketing and Community Development Specialist with Niagara Mohawk (National Grid). She also has extensive advertising account management experience, overseeing industrial, pharmaceutical, and financial accounts for the Paige/Smith Group and Barlow Murray Advertising. Pat is currently a member of University Hospital's Parent Advisory Council and a Volunteer Advocate. She also serves on the Advisory Board for Whole Me, Inc., a family and community mentoring program for the deaf community. She is past president of the American Marketing Association of CNY and has served on the boards of the CNY Eye Bank and Literacy Volunteers of America, New York State. Pat has a BS degree in Education from the State University College of New York at Buffalo and has completed post-graduate work toward her MBA from Syracuse University and LeMoyne College.