

Equation Research

1) Can you give the readers some background on Equation Research and what your company does?

Launched in 2000 by market research professionals and expert programmers, Equation Research has one of the most innovative online survey platforms in the market and an extensive list of Fortune 1000 clients. By utilizing innovative web survey technology and the experience of proven research strategies, Equation provides full service and execution only services for other research companies and directly for clients.

2) What types of projects does Equation specialize in, and who are some of the clients you serve?

We specialize in advertising and brand-related research, including ad/copy testing, concept testing, segmentation studies, typical usage and attitude studies, wave and continuous tracking, among others. We have three research products for the work we do in the area of ad and concept testing: adIQ for ad campaign effectiveness measurement, adLAB for ad/copy testing and conceptLAB for concept testing. Some of our clients include T.G.I. Friday's and Condé Nast Publishing.

3) How has iModerate helped you and your clients?

iModerate provides richer insight into the “why” behind the “what” in terms of the issues we are trying to measure or test. The information helps provide great context to the quantitative data we are collecting and goes so far beyond the typical open-ends responses you get in an online survey or even a telephone survey. These insights also serve as the ultimate “tie-breaker” when evaluating potential ads or concepts, in that the feedback you gain from these interviews leaves no doubt about the preferences of the respondents when it comes to side-by-side or monadic comparisons. Finally, our clients are big believers in the value of the moderated session to add the “optimization” component. By this, I am referring to getting actionable feedback from respondents that not only helps to pick among a series of tested ads or concepts, but provides direction on how to optimize that selection to best meet the needs of the consumer audience in question. The best example was a concept test where iModerate developed the qualitative guide, and whereby the moderator specifically asked the respondent to wear the brand's product team hat and offer suggestions on how to make their favorite concept even more attractive. The responses were remarkable in their specific details.

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4) What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing online research in 2007?

The biggest obstacle I see is the often discussed respondent quality issue. This comes into the forefront as more companies are “looking under the hood” at panel recruitment and respondent quality. I feel this is going to continue to garner attention and hopefully translate into tighter controls for panel recruitment and use.

5) What do you see as the next “big thing” in research?

I believe the next big thing is more of a focus on the survey respondent experience, and the continued development of methods for getting accurate, meaningful data while keeping survey respondents as engaged as possible. Part of this exploration is a response to the respondent quality and fatigue issue, and part is the natural evolution of using a dynamic, interactive technology, the Internet, for survey research that goes beyond the simple migration of telephone surveys to the web. iModerate is a great example of this and we think the trend will continue.