Whitepaper on Panel Quality

We care about the quality of responses from our panels. This whitepaper describes the different quality measures and gives insights into the processes and systems we follow to ensure a high quality, genuine and active panel.

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Introduction
to Panel Quality

Responses to market research surveys are as effective as the quality of sample they are collected from. It is difficult to trust market research results without a thorough understanding of the sample source. Another facet of this problem is ensuring the authenticity and quality of responses in a multi-screen, multi-device world. Once verified across devices, respondents can also be engaged as per their response pattern across different channels. This not only ensures a high response rate but an active panel as well.

At Borderless Access™ we have developed various systems and processes that work throughout the panelists' lifecycle and address these quality challenges.

Quality measures
in Panel Acquisition

Our panel is drawn from multiple sources and members are recruited using a broad array of techniques to ensure diversity and high quality. We believe unique and genuine respondents translate to quality responses. While maintaining panellist uniqueness in emerging markets is a challenge, we overcome this through our 5-step authentication process.

1

Recruitment by Invitation only

2

Double-opt-in

3

Mobile Phone Verification (Triple opt-in)

4

Social Media Verification

5

Ongoing Response Monitoring

All our panel operations run on our proprietary tool – SmartSight™. SmartSight™ is our indigenous community management platform built on an advanced-analytics engine that allows us to understand and predict panelists' behaviour.

It works across all stages of panel management - recruitment, engagement, sampling and incentive management – throughout all our markets for any panel size.
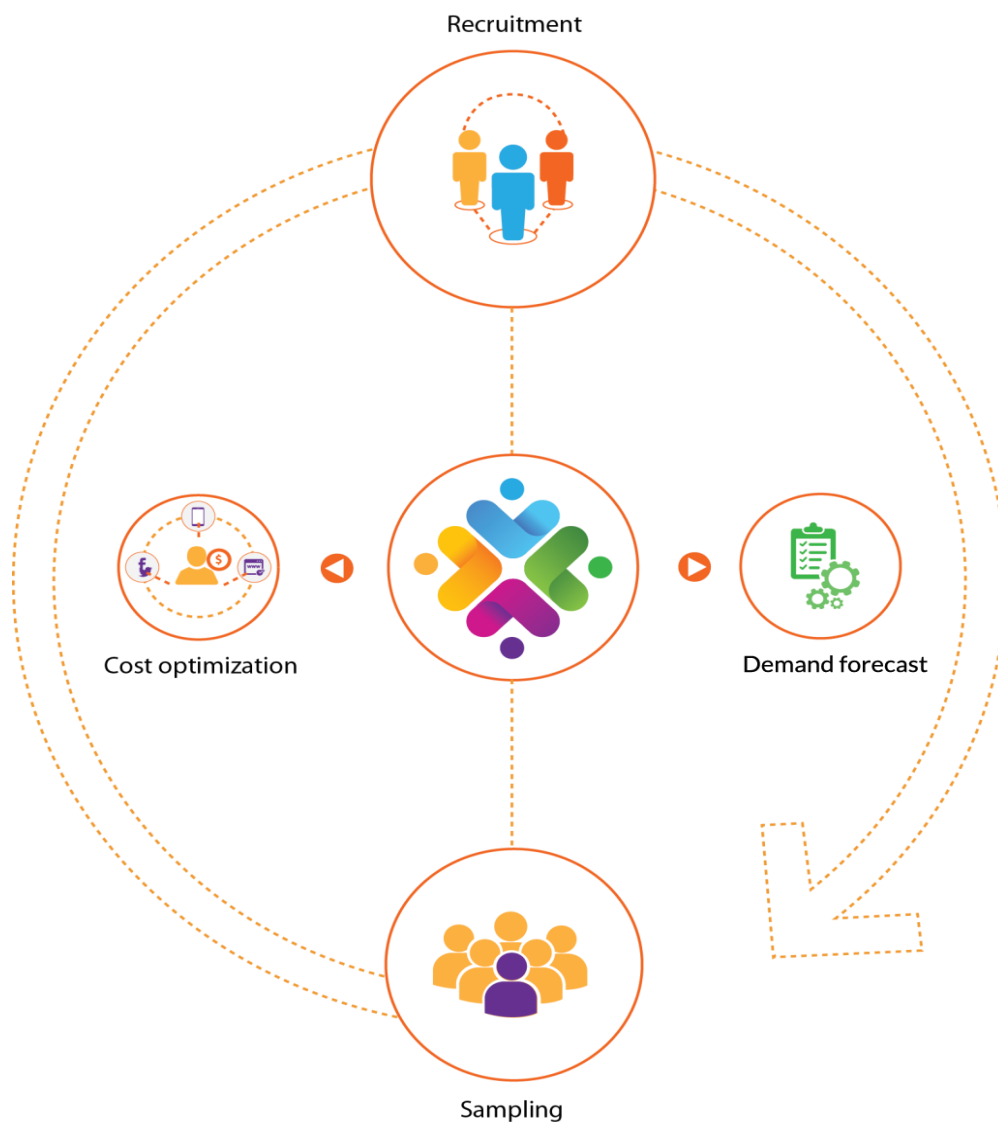
Recruitment

Cost optimization

Demand forecast

Sampling

For more information on how SmartSight™ works on each of these stages, write to us on marketing@borderlessaccess.com and book a demo.

We recruit panelists through advertising on major web portals as well as ads on social media websites and search engines, such as, Google, Facebook, Instagram, Yahoo, Bing, renowned publishers, affiliate partners, display network, employment websites, matrimonial sites, business news and technology portals such as CNET and other media portals, and with our proprietary mobile app.
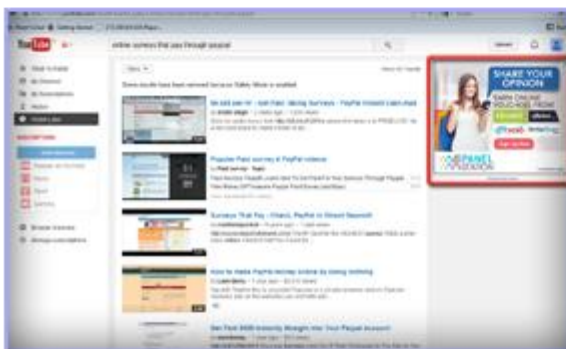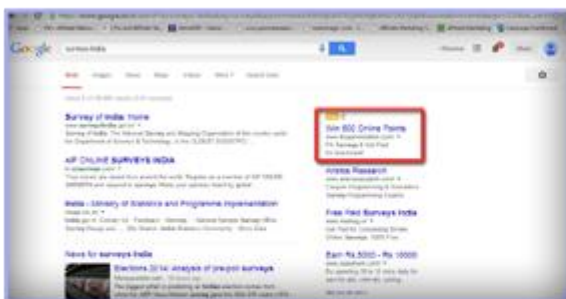
The checks placed while recruiting panelists are as follows:

Affiliate verification

A quality panel comes from a quality source. The affiliates and partners for recruitment as well as inventory sources (web/mobile/social traffic) are carefully selected and thoroughly reviewed for authenticity. We have already established strategic partnerships with over 400 websites as well as affiliate networks in our proprietary markets. The leads that flow in via the affiliate network are curated rigorously via custom algorithms that verify the panelist profile parameters such as first name, last name, date of birth, date of joining, IP address, digital fingerprint along with the campaign source. Bad/fraudulent leads are then filtered and the affiliate source is notified for preventive action.

CAPTCHA

To ensure safety from BOTS, we have added CAPTCHA verification at the registration stage as well as at the survey entry points.

Real-time reporting

Using SmartSight™, our acquisition team monitors the campaign performance across channels – mobile, online and social. The traffic controller and budget optimization features of SmartSight™ help us optimize spends across different channels and asses which recruitment approach works best across what channel. The dynamic dashboard gives real-time performance metrics, which include CPA (cost per acquisition), eCPA (effective cost per acquisition) and engagement choke points.

Maintaining representation

Our panels represent 95% of the online population in each country. We ensure this by maintaining soft quotas by age, gender and region. SmartSight™ lets us track and optimize sample quotas live. For requirements that are hard to fill, we boost traffic as per insights from SmartSight™.

Opt-in verification

In today's email SPAM infested world, it is very important for users to "opt-in" to become a part of an opinion panel. This ensures that the survey emails are passing through the spam filters of the panelists. All our panelists are recruited using triple opt-in signups. Any member who registers with our panel is sent a membership activation/follow-up link on their registered email address. After the panelist verifies the link in their email inbox, they are asked to verify their mobile phone numbers. A code is sent to their mobile number and the account is activated only after the code is verified.

BORDERLESS ACCESS™ — Redefining Reach and Insights

Fraud protection

SmartSight™ has a directory of fake and temporary email service providers, this directory is refreshed monthly. We block any respondent who registers from any of these domains. Along-with the fake domain catchers, we monitor the panelist response trends and check for response consistency.

Tackling fraudulent respondents

SmartSight™ flags "suspects" using our proprietary fraud algorithms, digital fingerprinting, and AI-ML techniques. We use these techniques for a constant scrub and remove panelists who create a multiple id's or are trying to cheat the system or provide bad quality of responses, amongst other malpractices.

Member referral

Referrals from existing panelists are an established way to gain validated members. This process though isn't fool proof in all countries. This is why SmartSight™'s fraud detection algorithms do an IP, mobile, device ID and social media checks to ensure that we do not have duplicate respondents. If a new panelist clears the quality check, the referrer receives incentives for providing a valid referral.

Multimodal verification

All our panelists undergo multi-modal verification on email and mobile. For a few of our markets we also do social media and postal address verification at the redemption stage. Validation checks at all stages of panelist life cycle ensure recruitment of genuine respondents and authenticity of data samples. Email and mobile phone verification are mandatory for all our panelists. Once verified, the panelists undergo social media verification. Multi-modal verification screens fraudulent profiles during the recruitment stage and improves the response rate. Apart from the security benefits - mobile and social media provide opportunities to engage our panelists.
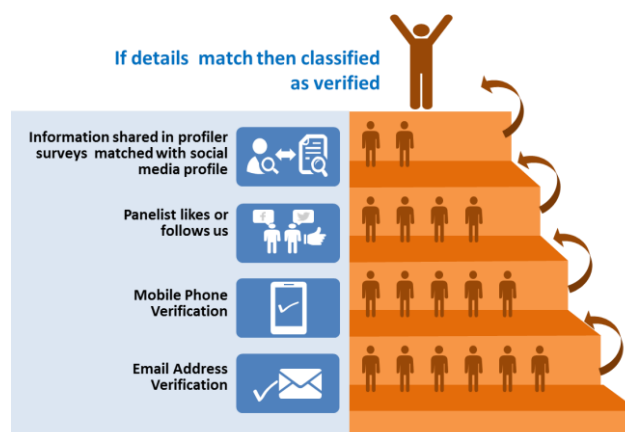
Quality measures
in Panel Management

During the registration process, automated, machine-driven fraud checks are performed in the background on the user system within the community. These checks cover browser footprints, digital footprints, IP addresses, and many other such parameters to keep duplicate accounts out.

Once the panelists are verified and recruited, they undergo profiling. Quality processes in panel management address the following aspects of a panelists life cycle:

- o Profiling
- o Sampling and delivery
- o Engagement

Panel profiling and personal data verification

- Borderless Access never stops collecting information about its panelists.

- We use industry best digital fingerprinting layered with our proprietary fraud algorithms and AI-ML techniques to ensure only genuine and unique respondents are allowed to enter the survey.

- Once the basic demographic information is collected, we send across a detailed profiling survey, which also helps ascertain the data consistency. Respondents who fail to meet expectations are removed from the system.

- Our panelists are profiled for over 80 parameters ranging from demographics to specialty attributes such as vehicle ownership, travel, healthcare, finance, household, purchase intentions, etc.

- On special client requests, we conduct Quick In-depth Profiling (QIP) for a set of respondents. These respondents are re-profiled and classified into sub-verticals as per client criteria.

- All our panelists are encouraged to keep updated profiles. Panelists are re-screened every few months and defaulters are removed from the panel. B2C panel is re-profiled once in 4 months. B2B panel is re-profiled once in 6 months.

- We also perform selective verification of panelists' information. Along with identity verification panelists also undergo location verification.

Panel recruitment and management

Our experience of managing research projects over a decade has given us an in-depth understanding and proficiency in all leading online research software. Our Intelligent community management platform – SmartSight™ – addresses all aspects of panel management – recruitment, sampling, engagement and incentive management. We also have licenses for industry-standard survey and market research tools such as Confirmit, Askia, Decipher, QuestionPro, Lumi, WinCross and Tableau and our teams are trained on using these.

We are an **ISO 27001-2013 certified and a GDPR compliant company** and go the extra mile when it comes to security:

- All web traffic for SmartSight™ is tunneled through SSL encrypted channels.

- Randomization procedures are carried out to avoid any biases.

- A process-driven documented approach is followed to ensure error-free programming.

- Surveys are hosted on Tier 1 cloud infrastructure provider, with server farms in the US. Our hosting servers ensure a 99.99999999% uptime, with 24/7 technical support and IP load balancing, with SSL acceleration to ensure high availability and performance.

- Daily backups, data footprint analysis, and multi-layer authentication are carried out to prevent data leakages. Our database is isolated from the application using a dual-layer firewall setup.

- For mobile surveys, our mobile app captures the unique device ID, which helps ensure that each panelist is tagged to a unique device, avoiding duplicates.

- Panelist identity and other information is verified using a reputed external (third party) data source.

SmartSight™ has an inbuilt survey feedback system that matches the panelists to the surveys. Panelists who fulfill the profiling criteria are again matched with their preferences so that they only receive surveys that they are more likely to answer, improving the overall response rate.

For more information on how SmartSight™ works on each of these stages, write to us on marketing@borderlessaccess.com and book a demo.

Features:

- The community management tool, as well as our panel, is GDPR compliant.

- It captures information such as participation history, date and time of entry, source, etc. We maintain such records for internal analysis of respondent activity.

- Inactive panelists are periodically churned.

- Overactive panelists are segmented to a "cool off" area and are not invited to surveys for at least a month or more.

- It maintains Geo IP lookups and algorithmic searches for duplicate sign-ups as well as for multiple members from the same household.

- It can identify and eradicate duplicate panelists through a combination of Imperium's digital fingerprinting and our proprietary behavioural pattern analysis tools.

- It identifies and flags speedsters, "straight-liners", "zig-zaggers" and other types of fraudulent panelists.

- Panelists with email bounce backs are flagged and such panelists are removed by our system.

- Minimum time thresholds proactively weed out responses that appear to be the result of fast, careless answering.

- It contains an in-built digital fingerprinting module to tag unique systems with panelists.

- Automated, machine-driven surveillance on the panelists are performed based on their activities and behaviour in the panel to identify any suspicious acts and filter out. The algorithms are complex, taking into consideration a mix of parameters such as IP usage, browser footprints, digital footprints, mobile device associations, suspicious geo-tags, response quality history, redemption patterns, completion rates, in-depth profile scrutiny on actual facts against claimed facts, etc.

- We conduct trap surveys periodically to verify panelist authenticity. These surveys are delivered as regular points-based surveys with caveats that validate the key elements of the panelist's profile along with the survey data quality.

Panelist engagement and satisfaction

Strong respondent cooperation is critical for maintaining data quality. We take the following measures to ensure that our panelists are engaged and satisfied with our surveys:

- **Feedback surveys:** Quarterly satisfaction surveys on survey length, response types, incentives to strengthen the relationship and establish trust.

- **Social media engagement:** We have panelist facing social media properties on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Weibo, etc. for engagement activities such as sweepstakes, contests, and quizzes, to ensure a healthy and active panel.

- **Attractive and easy-to-redeem incentives:** Our incentives policy ensures that all respondents are properly rewarded for their participation.

- **Survey frequency controls:** We maintain the number of surveys sent out to each panelist, as well as their frequency, at a healthy level.

- **Share research findings:** Wherever possible we share executive summaries with participants. This is done on prior approval from our clients.

- **24/7 support:** Support teams for each market ensure timely response to panelists' queries on all mediums – email, phone, social and website.

- **Privacy policy:** We never share personally identifiable information about our panelists.

- **Contests and awards:** We regularly create contests and quizzes on social media and award the winners who are then recognized publicly.

- **Accessibility:** We understand the limitations panelists face while answering surveys. Our panel station mobile app makes it easy for survey takers to get notifications for their pending surveys and improves their experience with us. Since we know which device panelists are active on, we can reach them at the right time and on the right device to improve the response rate.

- **Rewards and recognition** – We reward panelists for longevity. Initiatives such as survey leader board, long term panelist awards and panelist badges along with gamification initiatives play a key role in increasing panelist lifetime value and improving data quality.

Contact Us

Connect with us to get latest updates:

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We are an ISO 27001: 2013 certified company

ISO
27001

Information Security Management System

Certified