

# MARKET RESEARCH: IN PRACTICE

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## Creating surveys

Surveying your potential customers should provide you with lots of useful information about the customers you expect to get through your door. In practice however, the exercise can be a waste of time if you don't think carefully about what information you need and how you are going to get that information. If, for example, you are going to survey your potential customers, it's important to do your preparation.

Here are a few tips to help you create effective surveys:

### Do:

Decide on exactly what information you need from your survey. This will help you to decide on the right questions to ask.

### Example:

I want to know where my potential customers currently get their hair cut.

### Question:

Where do you currently get your hair cut?

### Do:

Ask yourself why you need the information you're asking for. How will you use the information? If the information you get from a question is not going to be used to help you or you cannot be sure how you will use it, get rid of it.

### Do:

Tell respondents how you will use their information, respect their right to privacy and promise, for example, to destroy any data after the survey has been completed; make sure you do this.

### Do:

Limit your survey to no more than 10 questions and be honest about how long it will take respondents to complete the survey before you start.

### Do:

Consider offering respondents an incentive for completing the survey, for example, a free trial of your product or a gift voucher.

### Do:

Treat your survey as a marketing tool – consider how you can use it to promote your business and its brand.

### Do:

Double check the logic of your questions – for example, do they give you the information you need? If not, consider rephrasing your question so that it works for you.

### Example:

I want to know if a potential customer would come to me instead of going to their regular hairdresser

### Question:

Are you happy with your current hairdresser?

### Possible answer:

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

This question doesn't provide you with the important information you need, which is why?

### Question:

What would make you choose another hairdresser over your current hairdresser?

### Possible answer:

If they could come to my house.

### Don't:

Send out a survey that has spelling mistakes. It won't be taken seriously and neither will your business.

### Don't:

Ask too many closed questions – questions that can only be answered with a yes/no. Open questions are used to gather information, for example, to explain what, when, where, whom, why and how. Closed questions are used to confirm or deny facts.

### Example:

Where do you look for a good plumber?

### Possible answer:

I'd ask my friends for a recommendation or I'd look in the yellow pages or on yell.com. I might also ring 118 because they sometimes recommend services.

### Example:

Do you use the Yellow Pages to look for a good plumber?

### Possible answer:

Yes