

DIS CONSULTING CENTRALIZES DATA COLLECTION WITH KEY SURVEY

DIS Consulting is a small marketing and research consulting firm, serving clients who sell audio and video equipment to the broadcast industry. They're using Key Survey as a central point for collating and organizing the data they gather, as well as for gathering some of the data itself.

"An increasing number of respondents are led directly to the collection site," says CEO Douglas I. Sheer, "and they complete the surveys online."

Key Survey has a powerful suite of built-in analysis tools.

DIS, whose clients include a veritable who's who of broadcast equipment manufacturers, conducts research ranging from customized single-client surveys through to syndicated, multi-client research projects. They gather information from users and buyers of professional-quality broadcast technology – cameramen, audio engineers, editors and broadcast techs.

Many of these people don't spend a lot of time online, which means that direct online surveying is not always the best means of reaching them. Depending on the particular survey, from 5% to 25% of the responses might come directly through the internet – the rest are gathered through mail-in surveys and computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI).

It can take data in almost any form – and it's easy to work with.

"We're all over the planet in terms of different methods of collecting data," Sheer says. "But Key Survey is our central collection point. The data entry for ninety percent of our mail-in responses is handled by another company, but their employees use the Key Survey web interface. And all of our data from phone interviews goes in there – at present we only use Key Survey some of the time for CATI, but down the road we'll be using it all the time, so that we can collect and enter the data using a totally synchronous approach."

Put all your data in one place – summarize and analyze it in Key Survey.

Having all the data in one place – in Key Survey – allows it to be organized much more efficiently before tabulation, and to help with tabulation. Tabulation – the process of weighting and projecting answers in order to remove any skew a particular survey might have due to disproportionate responses from certain types of respondent – is a necessary procedure, and one which DIS usually sends to an outside company.

"We're anxiously anticipating that maybe a year or two out, Key Survey will actually be able to do the tabulating part of it as well," says Sheer. "At this point, where Key Survey is strongest is in describing percentages, describing and illustrating percentage ranking, and so forth. What it doesn't do is let you weight and project within Key Survey itself." However, the data can be, and is, exported from Key Survey in a single format – usually Excel or SPSS – to the tabulation company.

Key Survey is a first-rate clearinghouse for all your business data.

"What we've found with Key Survey," Sheer says, "is that it's helped to reduce costs in collection, and it's helped to reduce some of the costs in data entry and tabulation. And the net of it is that it's helped the bottom line of the business."