

Focus on your clients, not yourself

Use persistent research to deepen engagement with
current and prospective customers

Sam Knox
Managing Director
Institutional Investor
Custom Research Lab

London
13 February 2019



Today's agenda

- The business value of firm-specific primary research
- Insight from the field:
 - Project scoping
 - Research partners selection
 - Developing the research agenda
 - Executing research
 - Keeping score – what does success look like

The business value of firm-specific primary research

MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS

Pillar of product marketing:
Conventional market research

The Four Ps for sellers

- Product: What's the offering?
- Price: How is the offering valuable?
- Place: Where to sell, and to whom?
- Promotion: How shall we tell the "value story"?

CONTRIBUTE TO OTHERS' DECISIONS

Pillar of consultative selling: Content marketing

The Four Ps for buyers

- Product: What shall I buy, if anything?
- Price: Value for my investment?
- Place: From whom, on what terms?
- Promotion: How can I decide with confidence?

AMERICAN EXPRESS

BLACKROCK

The seller

Global leader in payment systems seeks to deepen relationships with senior finance executives

World's largest asset manager seeks to engage with investment decision makers at pensions, foundations, endowments, etc.

The inquiry

“How will CFOs (a) govern their spending and hiring strategies and (b) direct the flow of \$/€/£/¥ to various spending categories?”

“How and why will large financial institutions allocate assets to various active and passive equity strategies?”

Sources of insight

12 years of global surveying (n=900) on the economic outlook, spending and hiring, technology, and the finance function.

Global survey of 200+ CIOs and PMs at large asset owning institutions in Europe, North America, Asia, and Latin America

Exposition

- Cobranded research report
- Infographics for social media
- Slide decks, press releases, and fact sheets for 30+ countries and regions

- Cobranded research report
- Social media postings
- Executive committee briefings

Project scoping with a few questions

Business objectives

What business outcomes do you seek?

Lead generation: “Ah-ha! Here’s my next new customer!”

Promote offerings: “Here’s my new thing!”

Get media attention: Earned media says, “Here’s something you should know!”

Deepen relationships: “Let’s take a close look at a complex problem.”

Research objectives

What information will help you achieve these outcomes?

Think like your reader: “What does he or she want to understand?”

Think like your buyer: “Whom does her or she trust, admire, and respect?”

Methods and exposition

How to develop and express a persuasive point of view?

Research methods: What combination of quantitative data, qualitative commentary, and story telling is most persuasive?

Forms of exposition: What will spur readers to act—big report, face-to-face engagement, clever, disruptive media, frequency vs. depth and detail, etc.?

Research partners selection—Who does what?



- **Access to authority:** Who can gather high quality, unimpeachable insights from credible sources?
- **Domain expertise:** Who knows industry dynamics, business problems, and professional roles?
- **Methods, processes, and story-telling:** Who knows how to compose good questions, analyze data, conduct interviews, and more importantly, tell engaging stories?

Developing the research agenda

Focus on customer's business problem

- Decision makers seek to understand what they should know. “What am I missing?”
- Sellers are trying to build credibility and strengthen relationships
- Done well, content marketing can supplant conventional media
- Ultimately, your customer's business problem is solved by your solution

A great research agenda

- Posed and examines interesting unanswered questions
- Balances advocacy with knowledgeable, pragmatic realism
- Confirms, denies, and embellishes conventional wisdom
- Tells a new story about an important problem

Executing research

1. Assign a small team of your best people.
2. Engage vendors that demonstrate knowledge and expertise in *your* business.
3. Move briskly – Lengthy projects lead to fragmented teams, new team members, scope creep, and disappointment.
4. Limit reviews – Engaged, authoritative reviewers are better than a politburo of people “making suggestions” for things that are “nice to have.”
5. Own it – you can outsource tasks, but you can’t outsource risk.

Keeping score – what does success look like?

Remember “Project scoping with a few questions”?

Business objectives

What business outcomes do you seek?

Research objectives

What information will help you achieve these outcomes?

Methods and exposition

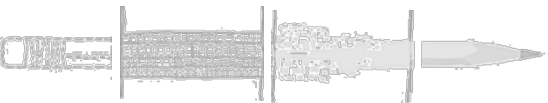
How to develop and express a persuasive point of view?

Measure performance using metrics tied to business objectives

Take full advantage of measurement opportunities embedded in new media

iResearch Services Clients

 High performance. Delivered.				
				
				
				
				
				
				





Questions and comments?