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COVID-19

Open Community Support Circle

4th session | Focus groups, where do we go from here?

Follow up – Tips and Findings

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Key Recommendations
Speaker notes from the 10:30 CET Presentation

"Taking focus groups online is not easy – the shift has to be well explained to clients and we, as researchers, must reassure them about the change in methodology. It is also important to have expert moderators to ensure respondents feel at ease, especially in this time of crisis when they feel additional concerns."

Convincing Clients

Methodological Quality

Skills to Transition Online

Convincing Clients

When switching from the physical to the digital, some clients are not reassured this is the best way and prefer to simply postpone the research - start with those clients who are familiar and comfortable with online technologies.

Demonstrate to clients how your online methods work in order to foster their trust and be patient - the change doesn't happen overnight.

Compare the online and offline focus groups side by side and highlight the benefits of going virtual, such as the potential for a wider geographical reach, and the potential for gathering new, rich and interesting insights.

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Methodological Quality

Keep your participants motivated and engaged, for example: try to gamify the interactions, or ask fewer questions per day and engage for a few days in a row.

Make sure you understand your respondents and ensure everyone is in the same mood. Motivate them that they can have an impact on the future by sharing their thoughts and opinions.

Train your moderators that they can also capture the non-verbal interaction online.

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Skills to Transition Online

Start with a new project, not an existing project that now moved online.

Don't see it as a cost saving, but as a way to enrich the data you capture.

Be ready for change. The situation will not be same as it was before Covid-19, and the sector should be ready to embrace the new normal.

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Key Recommendations

Speaker notes from the 18:30 CET Presentation

"One of the things that certainly stands out is that companies and brands are looking to pivot to new changes and review their strategies in light of the current situation – our clients therefore still require qualitative research, so we must also adapt to this new environment."
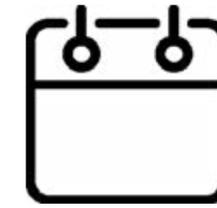
Tips for Preparation

Recruiting Participants

Privacy and Recordings

Tips for Preparation

Ensure you have a neutral background in your room when using a webcam.

Take some time to understand the platform you are using, so you know its features and limitations, and don't be shy about technical difficulties.

Nearly everything that can be done in the office can be done online using screenshare, but it does require some creativity and imagination

When moderating groups, you can encourage show of hands to facilitate questions and keep the conversation going.

For group interviews, you may wish to have a maximum of 5-6 people in the virtual room so that everyone has the space and time to share opinions equally.

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Recruiting Participants

Brief your participants about the technical steps they have to logon to the platform.

When people are not very comfortable to computer technology, give very clear instructions, build in extra time, and minimize how much technology you are using.

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Privacy and Recordings

If you are conducting group interviews using webcams, instruct them to share their first name only in order to protect their identity.

To protect videos from being shared, you may ask clients to sign a video Non-Disclosure Agreement to agree not to share videos beyond their core internal team

Be mindful of collecting certain types of personal data in this context, such as sensitive health data.

Resources

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Check our library with Codes and Guidelines:
https://www.esomar.org/what-we-do/code-guidelines

Join the conversation in the ESOMAR LinkedIn Group:
https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2755/

Find relevant papers and presentations in ANA:
https://ana.esomar.org/

Visit our COVID-19 Resource Page:
https://www.esomar.org/covid-19