

Case Study: Market Research

Our client, a leading scholarly publisher in the social sciences, wished to conduct a market assessment to determine the perceived value and positioning of their product offering amongst their client base. The client wished to gain a much deeper understanding of their customer loyalty to both the corporate and product brands, as well as explore current levels of customer satisfaction. Amongst other goals they wished to determine the extent to which a potential pricing increase and content structure review could be undertaken without negatively impacting on their brand or revenues.

Working with the client, Maverick developed a research programme that would encourage the greatest possible number of responses at the same time as delivering the results the client required. The solution was to adopt a two phase approach, comprising an online survey supported by targeted, in-depth telephone interviews that would explore particular areas of concern. These included:

- Customer perceptions of the client's corporate and product brands
- Which were the immediate competing resources that the clients' customers (also) subscribed to and how were these compared to the client product proposition with regards to content coverage and value for money.
- Gain a better understanding of available (resource) budgets at the customer institutions and what proportion of which was allocated to electronic resources
- What were the levels of satisfaction with the client's current business and access models, and
- How could products be developed to continue to meet the needs of the academic community - and what were the pricing sensitivities surrounding how these developments might be funded via a potential pricing review.

To ensure that responses received were as representative of the customer base as possible, quotas were set that represented each region's percentage contribution to the client's overall revenue.

Following the online survey, in-depth telephone interviews were conducted to provide deeper understanding of particular key issues that were highlighted during Phase I of the research. The subsequent findings were then analysed and presented in a full report which also included a strategy paper with recommendations on how the client could move forward in all these areas.

Since the research was conducted, the client has been working hard to develop their content offering in line with the research findings. As a result, Maverick has subsequently been requested to provide top-level strategic assistance with this product and content development until the end of 2012.