
Ofcom's Cross-Platform Media Tracker

Notification of changes to the 2020 survey

1. Overview

Due to the ongoing situation surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic and current guidelines that are in place, Ofcom has made the decision to suspend all face-to-face fieldwork across all consumer research projects to protect the safety of everyone involved. The Cross-Platform Media Tracker is affected by this decision. This document details the alternative methodology that we will use to complete fieldwork this year, and the impact this will have on the 2020 data set.

A summary of changes – in brief

- The sample will remain a nationally representative sample of 2000 UK adults.
- Mixed mode method 87% online and 13% telephone (CATI) will replace the 50% face-to-face and 50% online design.
- The telephone interviews will specifically target the 13% of UK adults who are not online.
- The questionnaire structure and content will remain the same.

Background to survey

The Cross-Platform Media Tracker is a biennial survey that explores UK adults' attitudes and opinions towards television and radio broadcasting, and related areas such as programme standards, advertising and regulation.

The research findings from Ofcom's Media Tracker study provide a valuable source of information on consumers' attitudes and help inform Ofcom's work on broadcasting standards. Under the Communications Act 2003, Ofcom has a duty to draw up, and from time to time revise, a Code for television and radio services, covering programme standards. This includes the protection of under-18s, the application of generally accepted standards to provide adequate protection from the inclusion of harmful or offensive material, sponsorship, product placement in television programmes, and fairness and privacy. Ofcom recognises that people's views on what are generally accepted standards are subject to change over time, and so should be explored by ongoing consumer research. This survey is one of a range of sources that Ofcom uses in undertaking its broadcasting standards duties.

Methodology

Up until this year, the most recent methodology used for this survey was a mixed mode combination of in-home face-to-face interviews and online survey completion. The outbreak of covid-19 has prevented the face-to-face element from continuing. We also took the decision to initially suspend the online element so effectively the entire survey has been suspended throughout Q2 and Q3 2020.

We are now planning to commence the survey. There will be no changes to the questionnaire/survey content. The sample will remain a nationally representative sample of 2000 UK adults. Where we previously split the survey 50% online and 50% face to face, we will change the split to 87% online and 13% telephone (CATI). The telephone interviews will specifically target the

13% of UK adults who are not online and will be representative of this group. Fieldwork will commence in October 2020 and be completed by year end. Data will be published in Q1 2021.

Impact on 2020 data

As an official statistic, this survey provides longitudinal data which helps us understand how behaviours and attitudes shift over time. The change in methodology means that we may not be able to directly compare trend data to previous years. We will be evaluating the extent of this when we get the data back.

If you would like any further information, please email market.research@ofcom.org.uk