

Research in a Time of Disruption





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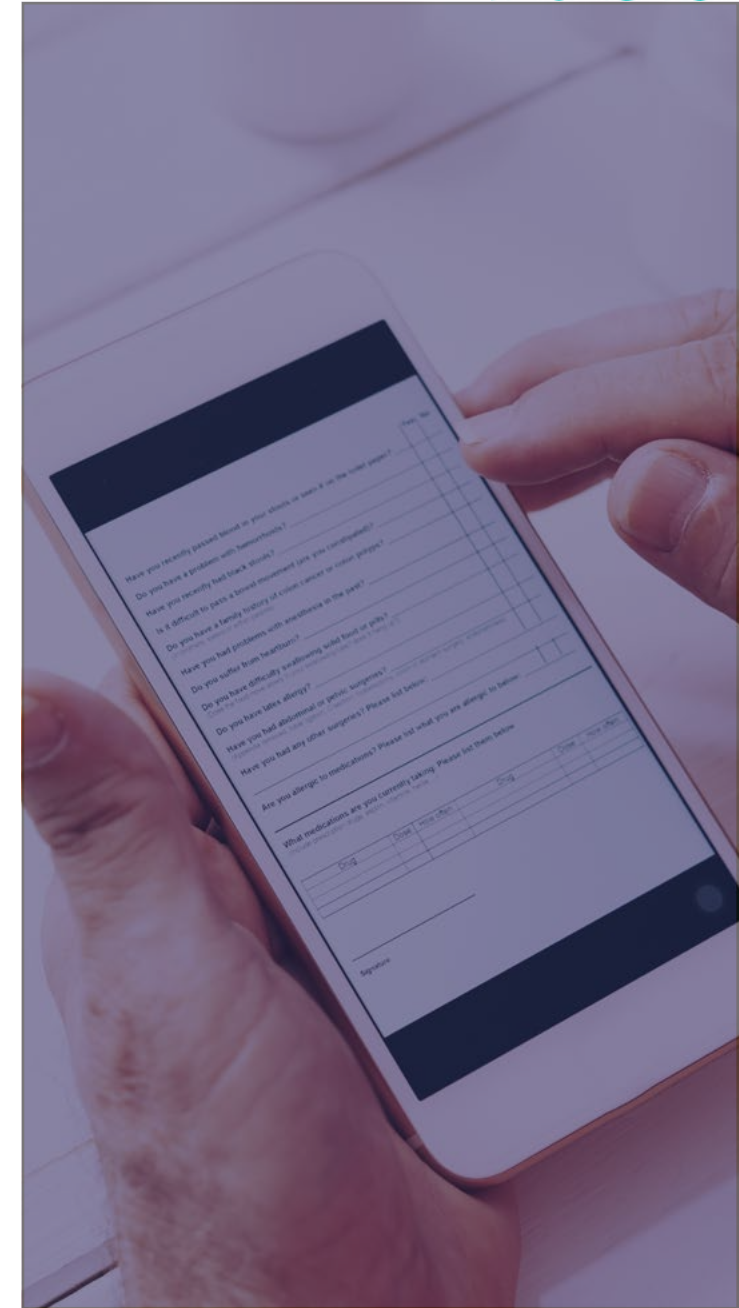
**Can We Conduct
Research Now?**

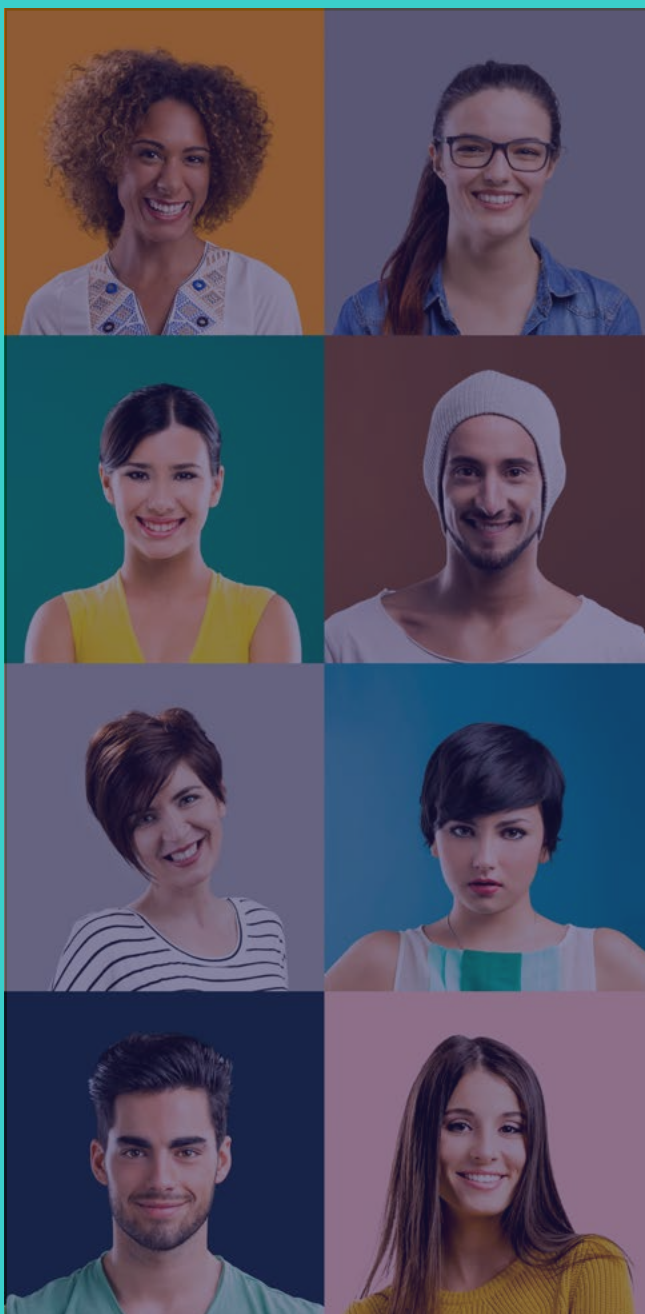
Can We Conduct Research Now?

Respondent Participation

We are currently seeing typical patterns of responsiveness and participation in our surveys, even in countries or regions hit hard by COVID-19.

We are closely monitoring survey participants and responses, and are in close and regular contact with sample providers to continue to monitor the situation in various countries. We will advise clients during project scoping if we see any changes that could affect research validity.





Can We Conduct Research Now?

Representativeness & Sample Balance

GutCheck's solutions rely on digital channels for data collection across a wide variety of sample partners. This means we're able to engage consumers on computers, tablets, and smartphones, no matter where they are located.

Because of this, the responses to our surveys are balanced and representative of the population of interest on key demographics even during times of upheaval.



**Should We Conduct
Research Now?**

Should We Conduct Research Now?

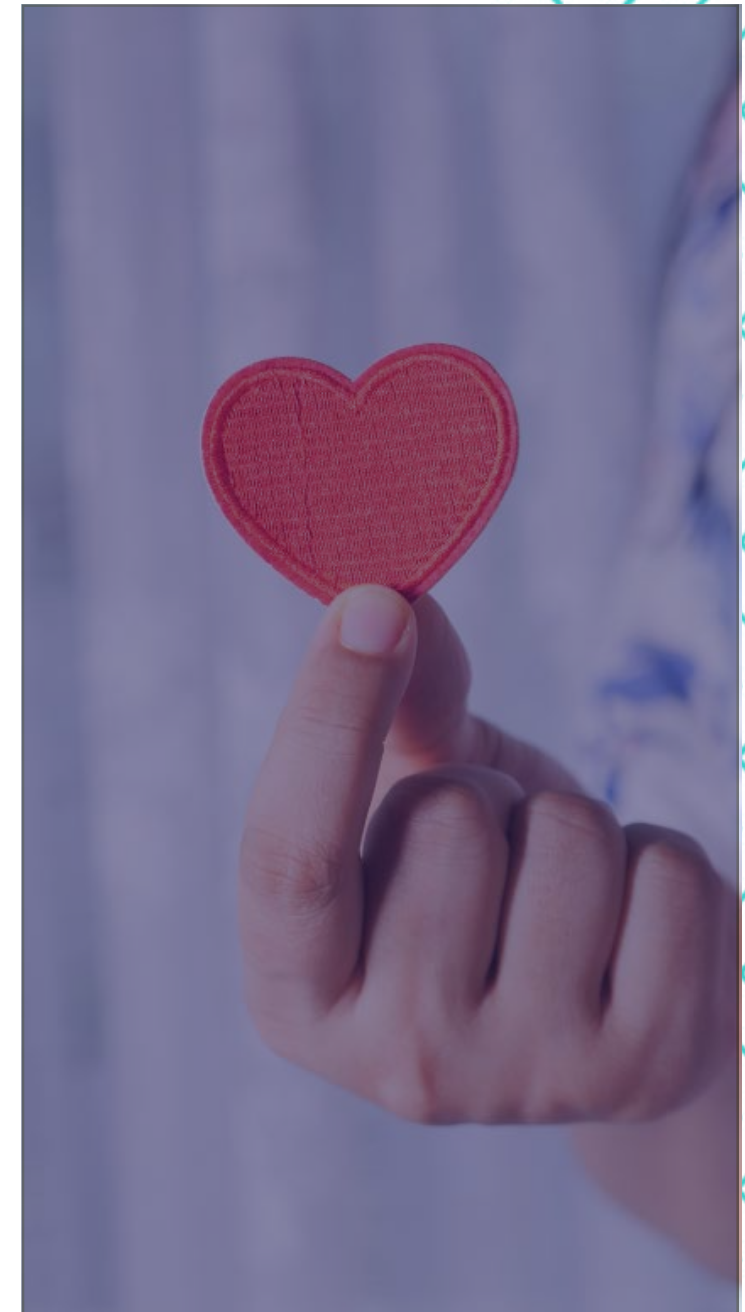
Empathy

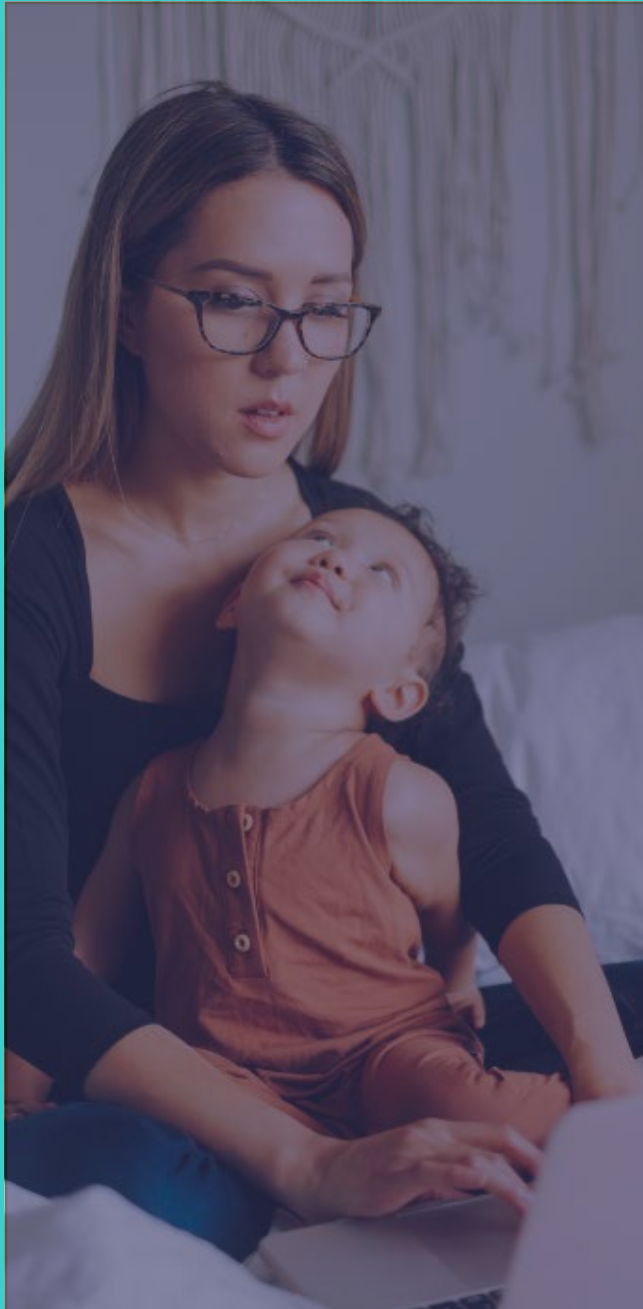
Research participants respond to empathic gestures in the same way that anyone does – it feels good to be understood. Changing the tone of your communications or adding a sentence to acknowledge that this is an unusual or difficult time is not something to shy away from.

At GutCheck, we tested new introductory language (see below) and found no bias on survey results. For clients who request it, we will use the language below to acknowledge the way people may be feeling.

Optional New Survey Intro Language:

Thank you for participating in our study! These are challenging times and we appreciate your willingness to share your opinion. If you qualify and complete the entire survey, it should take you approximately 10 minutes total.





Should We Conduct Research Now?

Respondent Burden

In times of major disruption, it's especially important to reduce the burden on those participating in research by keeping surveys short and making focus groups more convenient to attend.

We know from prior country/world disruptions that people will participate in research, with some even being appreciative of the opportunity to express themselves.

But they are juggling work and family in new ways today, and you risk losing their attention and goodwill if your survey is longer than 10-12 minutes.

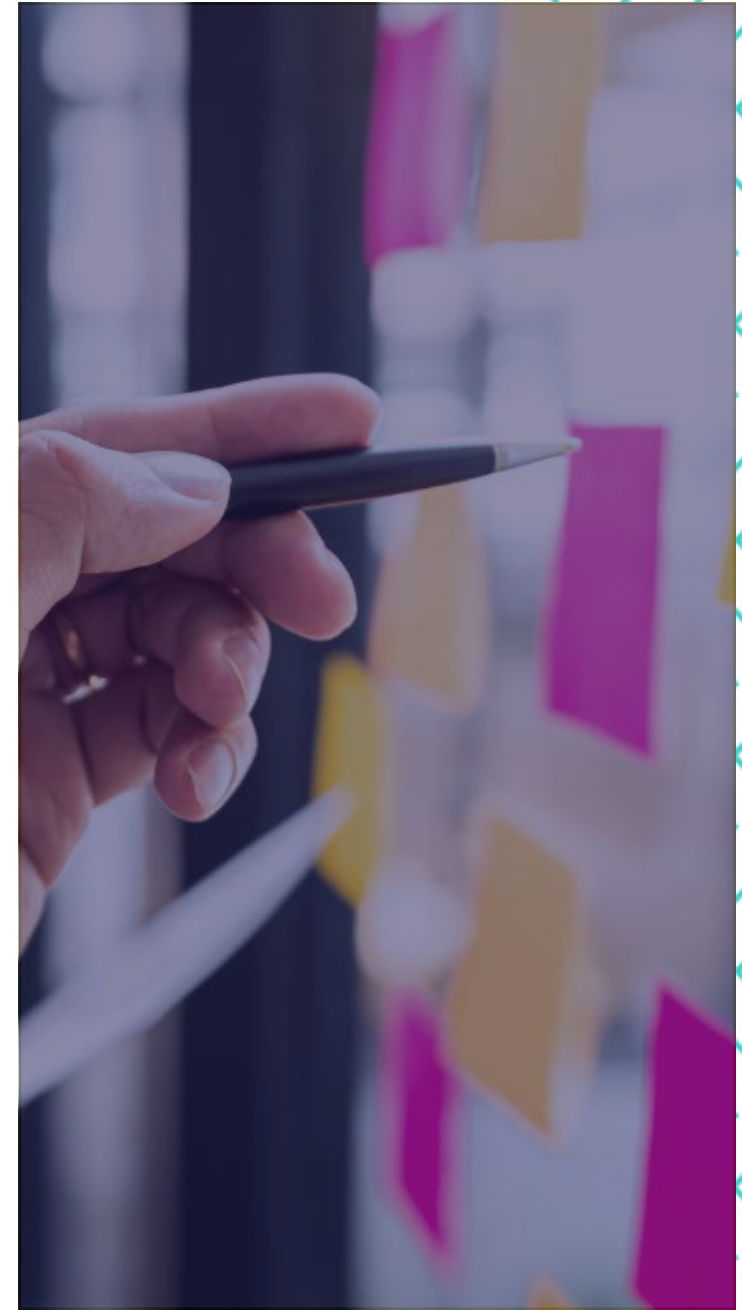
Should We Conduct Research Now?

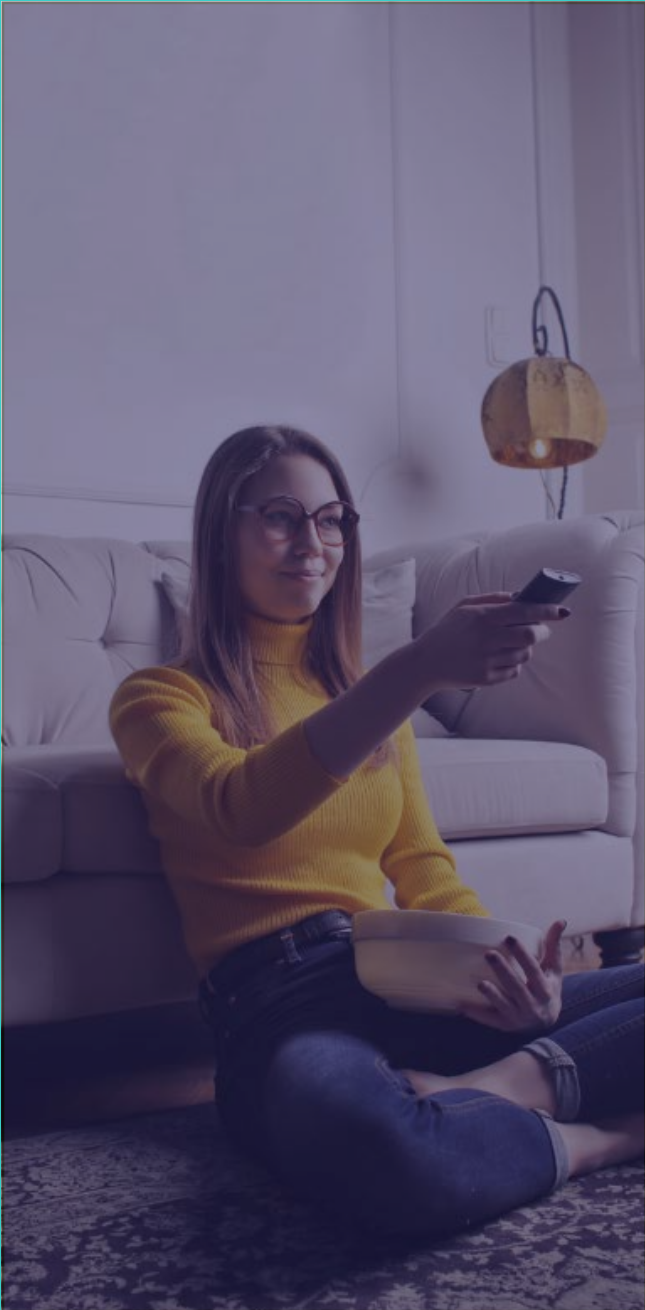
Change Brings Opportunities

Because of the disruption, many consumer behaviors have changed quite rapidly. Some changes will be temporary, while others will be permanent.

Understanding shifts in consumer mindsets during and after this disruption is key to knowing how to update your business strategy and to identifying new opportunities in the new post-COVID-19 world.

It can also be important to re-test messaging and ads created before the disruption to ensure the tone, imagery, music, and storylines are still perceived as appropriate among consumers who may be feeling more anxious or subdued.





Should We Conduct Research Now?

Be Thoughtful

But do be thoughtful. If you think your ad, product, or topic might feel inappropriate right now (e.g., trailer for a movie about a virus), then wait to test it.

If you're in an industry or sector affected by widespread shutdowns, review your standard metrics to determine if you need to modify the wording. Be careful using historical norms for decision making, as they may no longer apply.



How Should We Conduct Research Now?

How Should We Conduct Research Now?

Consider Reframing Questions

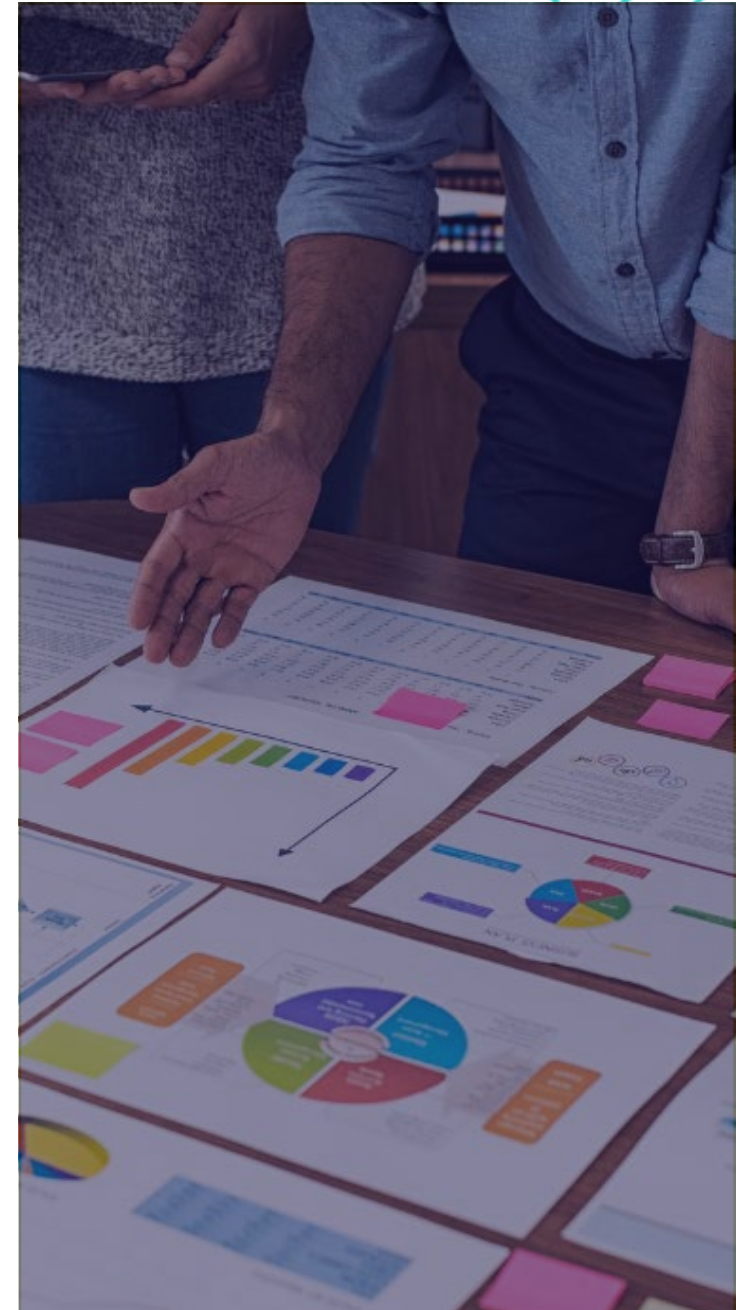
01 To Measure Purchase Intent Right Now Under Today's Circumstances*

Overall, how likely or unlikely would you be to purchase this product if it were available today?

02 To Measure Purchase Intent as if the Pandemic Had Not Occurred Under Typical Circumstances*

Under typical circumstances, before the COVID-19 situation, how likely or unlikely would you be to purchase this product if it were available today?

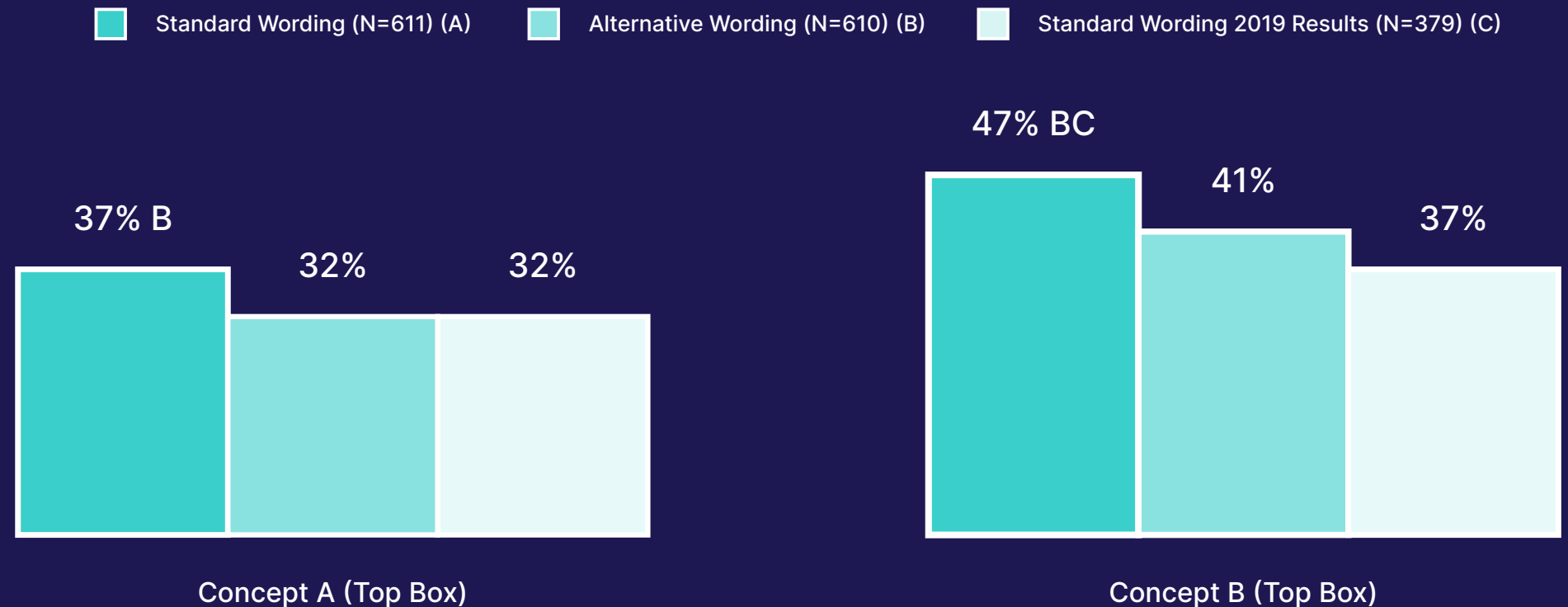
GutCheck research-on-research for concept testing shows that the same business decision (same winning concept) is recommended regardless of which question wording is used. However, the standard question wording produces slightly higher PI top box scores for some products when compared to the scores observed in Fall 2019.



How Should We Conduct Research Now?

Same Business Decisions in Concept Testing

Purchase Intent: Top Box



A/B/C statistically significant at 95% confidence, a/b/c statistically significant at 90% confidence



How Should We Conduct Research Now?

Getting Started

One way to start is with an online qualitative study so you can hear from consumers in their own words.

You can also explore shifts in consumer mindsets by running a short online quantitative study on habits and practices or attitudes and usage. Consider including 2-3 questions from a pre-disruption survey (conducted with the same sample and screening) so you can understand what may be shifting.

This is a good time to review any existing tracking studies to point you to areas where an agile quant or qual study can help diagnose what is going on. It is also a good time to launch an agile crisis tracker for a few weeks or a few months so you can better understand the consumer mindset and how consumer behavior is changing.



Other Questions We Are Asking

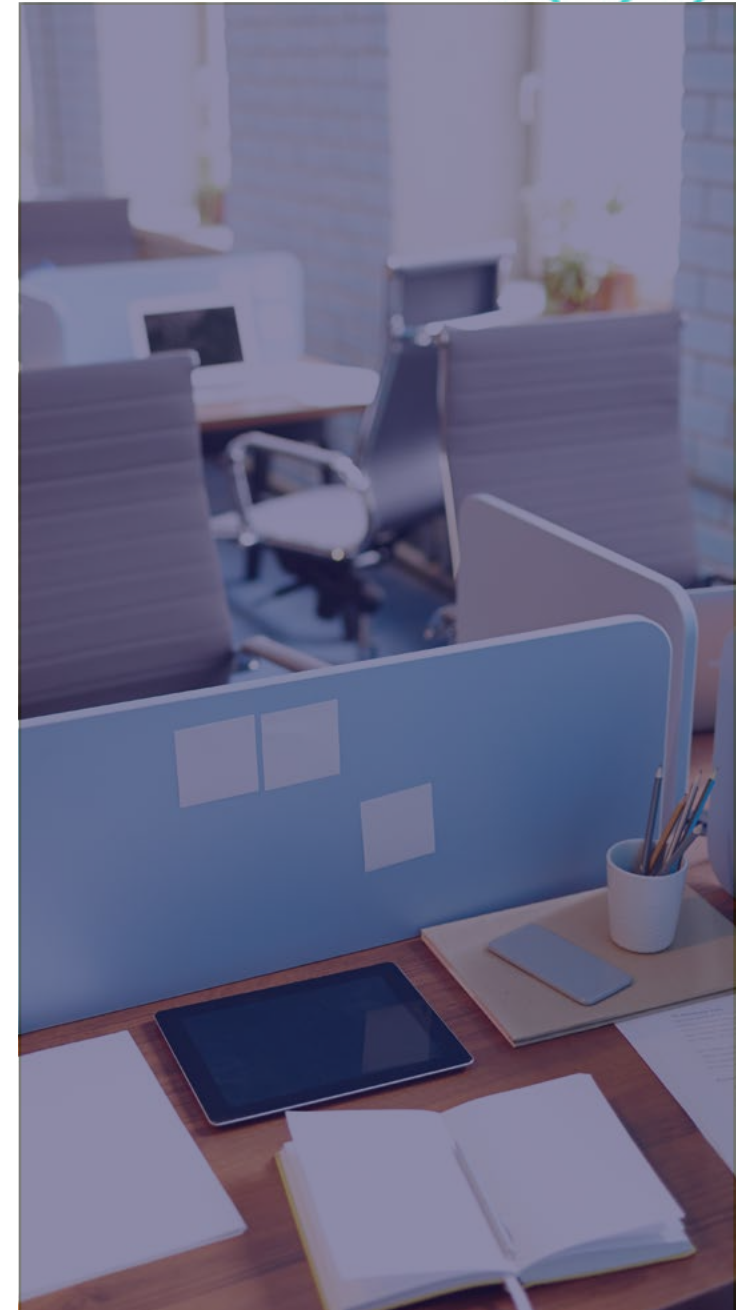
Other Questions We Are Asking

Is There Any Research I Should Avoid Doing Now?

There are no hard and fast rules. And there are no industries or sectors – not even health care – that are completely off limits.

Let your business strategy and objectives, combined with common sense and information from your research partners, guide you.

(Check out some examples from the finance industry on the next page.)



Other Questions We Are Asking

When to Do Research: Finance Examples



Testing Alternative Credit Card Offers

Yes, especially since you likely have new customers seeking credit and/or a credit card for online/mobile payment.



Feature Testing For a Wealth Management Website

Probably not immediately after a day of big stock market losses, since respondents and have little patience or desire to help. One the market stabilizes, then move forward.



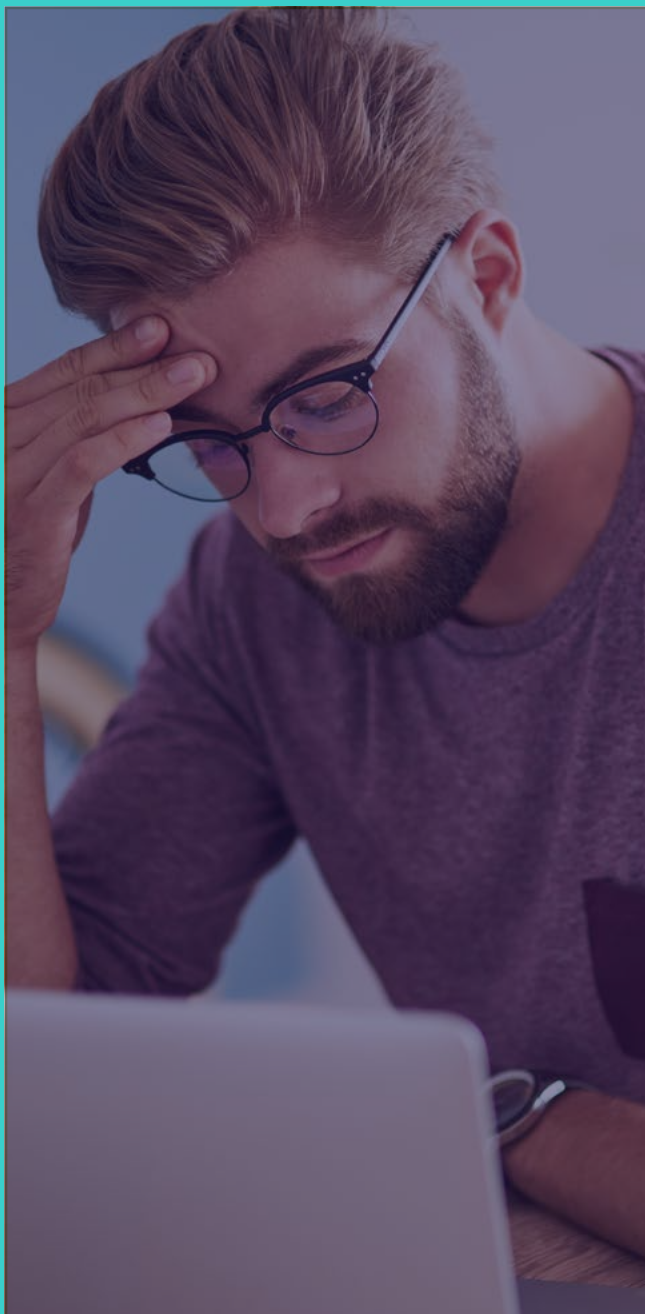
Testing TV Ads Meant To Increase Brand Awareness For a Life Insurance Company

Yes! You want to be sure your ads hit the right tone in today's environment and are not going to be viewed as "covidwashing."



Measuring Customer Service For the Most Recent Bank Visit

Maybe, but only if your branches have been open and you can contact those you know have made a recent visit.



Other Questions We Are Asking

Are Research Participants Responding More Emotionally Now?

No, we are not seeing evidence that respondent “emotionality” is systematically affecting survey responses.

For instance,

- We are not seeing unusual use of the extreme ends of scales for “strongly agree” or “strongly disagree” in any country we cover.
- Nor are we seeing unexpected emotionality in open-ended responses – not even when we ask about the impacts of the pandemic.
- In online qual, we have not seen people discussing effects of the pandemic in unsolicited ways. However, they are willing to discuss it when it is relevant to the question being asked.

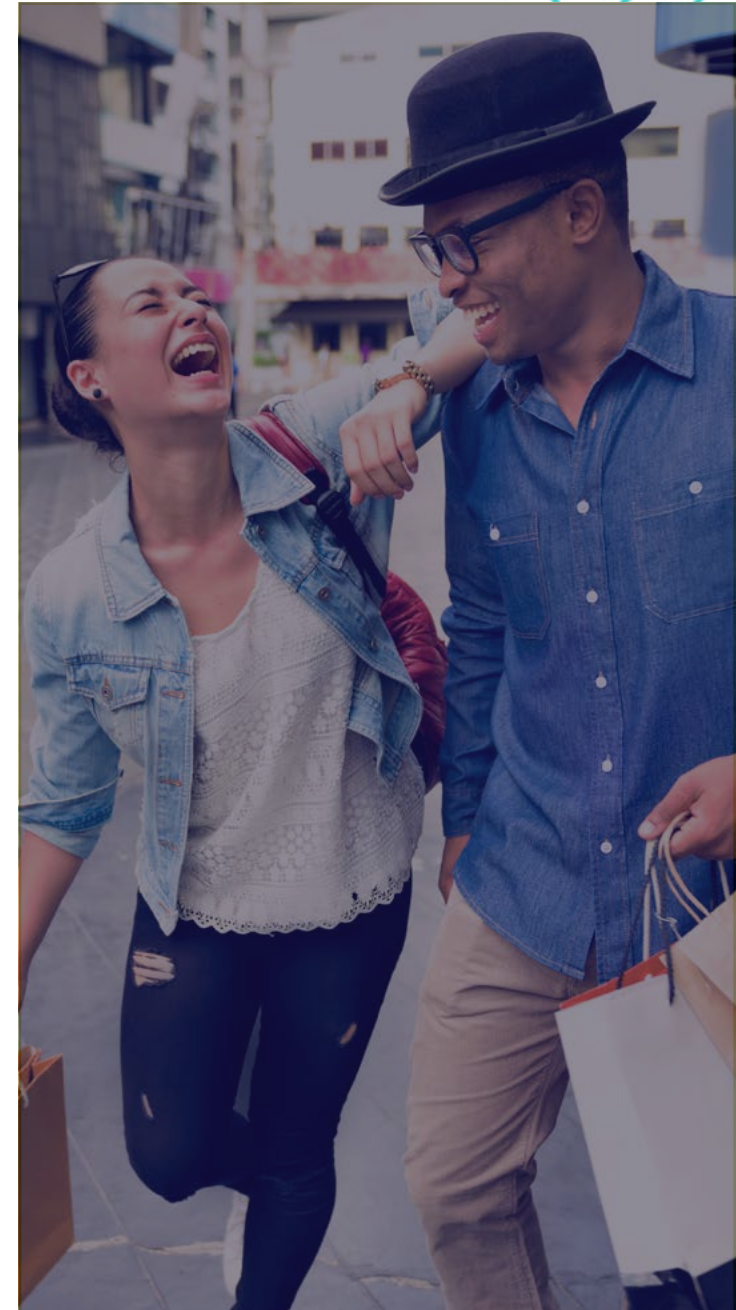
Other Questions We Are Asking

Should I Wait For a Return To “Normal” Before Doing Exploratory or Market Landscape Research?

No. Consumers tell us they expect it to take 6-9 months before things stabilize. Some expect a “new normal” different from the past, and most think negative economic effects will extend beyond 2020.

In the meantime, consumer behavior is evolving. You may have new customers for your products or services. Identifying them so you can retain them will help your business grow.

Now may be an especially good time to use agile exploratory research to refresh your audience understanding without a huge investment.



Discover How GutCheck Can Help You Conduct Research in Times of Disruption

CONTACT US



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