

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Absolute frequency – the number of respondents indicating a particular response (as opposed to a percentage); for example, the total number of respondents who had attended a performance once.

Analytical research – seeks to understand the how and why; for example, motivations and barriers to attendance.

Appendice – information that supplements the main text of a book or other publication.

Attender – person who attends performances. In research terms, usually segmented by those attending frequently, regularly, occasionally or for the first-time (or once only). Defining segments depends on how regularly a company performs in a locality.

Bias – factors that influence research findings, permitting prejudiced or non-objective results. Bias occurs as the result of the kinds of questions asked, the way they are asked or by the people in the sample; for example, a sample that is not a true reflection of your audience.

Chart (Pie, Bar, Line) – a visual representation of research findings. Includes Pie (a circle that is divided to reflect the proportions of a total); Bar (compares values over a number of categories); and Line (compares values over a number of categories but more usually over time).

Closed question – the respondent selects an answer from a list provided.

Coding question (or code number) – each possible closed question answer has a number assigned to it, which is used for data entry.

Completion mechanism – the means by which a person participates in a survey.

Contingency – allowing some leeway in a plan to accommodate unexpected circumstances, such as additional costs.

Convenience sampling – surveys conducted at the place where the target audience gathers, for example, at a performance.

Cross-tabulation – tables that compare the information relating to segments within your sample; for example, comparing how younger people vary from older people in terms of interest in the performing arts.

Data analysis – interpretation of the information and statistics gathered during research.

Data entry (or input) – entering the answers to questions into a computer program.

Demographic – social information relating to age, gender, income, marital status, ethnicity, etc.

Descriptive research – describes an audience and their characteristics at a particular time.

Dichotomous question – the respondent must select from only two choices in response to a question; for example: Are you male or female?

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Predictive research – provides answers to ‘What if?’ scenarios; for example, what will happen if we move to a different venue? What will happen if we change the name of the company?

Primary research – obtains information from an original source (the target audience) for a specific purpose.

Qualitative research – explores how people think or behave, and why. Usually conducted through open-ended questioning, it requires a skilled interviewer or moderator who is trained in interpreting findings.

Quantitative research – counts the number of people who behave in certain ways or hold certain attitudes. The attributes must be measurable.

Quota sampling – targets are set for completed responses from specific categories of people. Quotas are representative of the known population.

Random sampling – everyone has an equal chance of being involved; for example, every third person on the list.

Recruitment – in research terms, the process of recruiting people to be part of a research program; usually relates to booking interview times or attendance at a focus group.

Relative frequency – the proportion (percentage) of respondents who give a particular response.

Repeat attendance – audiences who return to see other performances.

Representative sample (or unbiased sample) – reflects the make-up/composition of an audience; not skewed to one particular type of person.

Respondent – person who answers questions in a questionnaire.

Response rate – responses received as a proportion of the total questionnaires distributed or the total audience that could have completed a questionnaire at a performance.

Return mechanism – the means by which a person returns a questionnaire (post, Reply Paid, etc.).

Sample size – the number of people who complete a questionnaire or participate in a research program.

Scaled response question – includes a scale by which a respondent can rate their approval or disapproval, agreement or non-agreement, and so on; for example: extremely enjoyable, very enjoyable, etc.).

Screening question – asked at the beginning of the interview to verify that the person belongs to the target audience.

Secondary research – conducted by other organisations.

Self-completion questionnaire – completed in writing by the person answering the questions.

Sub-category – a group of people within the total sample who share certain characteristics, such as age.

Survey software – computer program designed for the input of data gathered during audience research.

Tabulation – process of creating a table that sets out the data under headings for each column and row.

Tracking research – conducted over time to monitor changes in the marketplace such as attitudes to, or support for, a particular company.

Variations – changes or differences over time or within sub-categories of data.

Visual aid – picture or text used during face-to-face interview or focus group.