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| 211 Main Street Chicago, IL 19001 | |
| Interviewee: John Doe, VP Sales | |
| FAST FACTS Age of Company: 11 years Revenue: \$28.7M Number of Employees: 127 Number of Customers: 594 Distributor: Jones Marketing: *** Sales: *** Operations: *** | INTERVIEW SUMMARY Jones lamented the inadequateness of the distributor's website when it comes to configuring and ordering some products. He said he can and has done just as well for his customers by bypassing Johnson and ordering directly from the Red website. He said the distributor fails to adequately help him configure systems. Jones noted his purple business is being taken over by large integrators, such as Elephantine, and the distributor can do little to help. Maintenance contracts are another sore spot, a problem that leads back to Red itself. |
| Booking a maintenance contract with Jones or Smith is the worst experience you ever want to go through. | FINANCE Financial services: "We have used them in the past. I would give that a pretty good rating." |
|  John Doe Vice President of Sales | OPERATIONS "Their shipping operations are fine." |
| | MARKETING Marketing services: "They do offer some, but we've had zero success doing that and it ends up being an unwanted cost." |
| | ECOMMERCE "We use Johnson's eCommerce only for what's effective, like order tracking. Definitely not for configuration or order quoting. Their product catalog is very poor. But product tracking, once you get the order placed, is very good." "I really am to the point where I would rather just go to Blue's website and order directly. Their interface is better than the one the master distributor ever put together. At least on Red.com, I can go on there and order a box. They step me through. It's a real nice and effective way to go in and configure a box and not miss any parts you need. Green has never, and they know this, they still don't, to this day, have a good website. They have a good order-tracking website, but they don't really provide the knowledge you need in product configuration. They can't even give me a good parts list. You call in, they do a quote internally, e-mail it to me and then I have to transcribe it. I figured out how to go into Redcom and do it myself." "Red has just done a much, better job on web development front. Johnson has a distributor mentality." |
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Quotes, analysis and recommendations are in an executive-friendly format.

Problems With Typical Research

Shallow Answers

Telemarketing surveys often deliver little information beyond what's asked. While this approach is good for statistical confirmations, it's terrible if the objective is to truly learn what is on the minds of prospects.

Low Responses

Mass-market research requires a huge universe of prospects to call, given the small number willing to answer telemarketing survey questions.

The Journalistic Approach To Research

Using Veteran Reporter Subject Experts, We Conduct In-Depth Interviews With Key Executives. Focus Is Depth Of Data, Not Quantity Of Interviews

By definition, research is the process of learning that which is unknown. Traditional research services focus on large numbers of responses — requiring massive numbers of names to be called — but little new information or ideas are gleaned from each call. In other words, it's quantity versus quality.

The approach used by The Content Firm's Intense Research™ is the opposite. Using veteran journalists who specialize in the particular topic, we conduct in-depth interviews (often averaging an hour or more each) with the target interviewees.

A sharp contrast to the telemarketing feel, the journalists are often known by name to the interviewees (who frequently read the publications for which the journalists write) and the interview tends to feel more like an open-ended discussion than a survey.

We never use scripts, opting instead to simply have a list of issues to ask about. It's quite common for some of the interviews to veer off in whatever direction the interviewee chooses, allowing us to report back the true thoughts and concerns of the interviewees. We believe this gives our clients a much more realistic sense of the landscape.

The Intense Research™ reports include verbatim quotes from each interview, along with trend data, analysis of the collective responses and recommendations for how our clients might use this information.