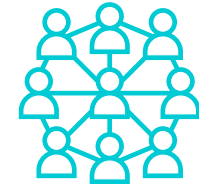


Proprietary Panel, Private Client Panel, or Community – Which is Right for You?

In marketing research, you hear a lot about panels and communities. But what are they, and what are they used for? This table gives a summary of proprietary panels (those offered to the general marketing research industry by private companies), private client

panels (those created and maintained for a specific client where the client owns the panel) and communities (smaller, short-term, collaborative, and interactive groups brought together online for a specific company's proprietary use).



	PROPRIETARY PANEL	PRIVATE CLIENT PANEL	COMMUNITY OR MARKETING RESEARCH ONLINE COMMUNITY
Definition	A database of participants who have registered via an online website to participate in market research surveys in return for money, online rewards, etc. Most are double-opt-in and have gathered hundreds to thousands of data points on their members to tailor survey invites to the appropriate group.	A database of participants who have registered their interest in participating in market research activities for the client's specific company. This type of panel usually incorporates the client's customer list and sometimes contains a mix of customers and non-customers.	A Research Community is an actively engaged group of participants who regularly share and discuss ideas. In a community, customers will discuss openly and collaborate around topics (as opposed to a panel where they respond in private). The goal is to hear how consumers organically talk about brands, services, or challenges they face frequently. Community members can start discussions about new ideas and collaborate on topics they care about.
General Size	Hundreds of thousands to millions	Thousands to hundreds of thousands	A few dozen to a few hundred or more
Type of projects	Quantitative but sometimes Qualitative depending on the panel	Quantitative and Qualitative	Quantitative and Qualitative
Incentives	Pay for participation, sweepstakes	Pay for participation, sweepstakes, coupons/discounts from the client, and free products or services from the client.	Pay for participation, sweepstakes, coupons/discounts from the client, and free products or services from the client.



PROPRIETARY PANEL

PRIVATE CLIENT PANEL

COMMUNITY OR MARKETING RESEARCH ONLINE COMMUNITY

	PROPRIETARY PANEL	PRIVATE CLIENT PANEL	COMMUNITY OR MARKETING RESEARCH ONLINE COMMUNITY
Response Rates	Lower (<10%)	10% - 20%	Higher (50%)
Member Tenure	Average a few months, but depending on the panel can be longer	Average a few months to a few years	Variable, fixed to project term (several weeks to 1 year)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less expensive to use • No maintenance costs • Already exists – no recruiting • Anytime access • Specialty panels for certain hard-to-recruit populations (i.e., healthcare, B2B, IT Decision Makers) • Allows for turn-key survey research • Can use partner panels to supplement samples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You own it, so you have exclusivity and control • Your branding • Anytime access • Seamless • Higher response rates • Better data quality • Only contains the participants you need and want 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You own it, so you have exclusivity and control • Your branding • Anytime access • Every participant is recruited for a specific purpose with specific characteristics • Provides the opportunity for longitudinal learning
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not built for any individual company, so may not have enough of the desired population. • Data quality can vary greatly between different panels • How panels are recruited and managed could lead to biases or unexpected results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive and time-consuming to build the panel • Maintenance can be expensive and labor-intensive • There is a continual need to offer enough projects to keep the panel active to prevent attrition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample sizes are small • Enough topics and regular communications are required to keep the panel active and engaged to prevent attrition
Use this one when...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You need more of a general population sample, especially for brand awareness and positioning surveys, surveys on attitudes and perceptions, and competitive intelligence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You need to get information from your customers, especially those loyal or frequent purchasers, especially surveys about product purchase and use, product development, and new product ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You need to hear the voice of your customer, especially around emerging topics, • When you need collaboration, especially for new product development.



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817.649.5243 | info@symmetricsampling.com | www.symmetricsampling.com